

Pressure grows for hostage release

McCarthy and Keenan alive, but in chains

By Staff Reporters

CAMPAIGNERS for the release of the four British hostages being held in Lebanon are increasing pressure on the Government to step up its efforts on their behalf after learning yesterday that two of the captives are alive.

Families and friends of Mr John McCarthy and Mr Brian Keenan were overjoyed after hearing confirmation that the two men kidnapped in Beirut in April 1986 were well. Mr Frank Reed, the American released on Monday, said he had had a long conversation with them on Saturday.

Mr Reed shouted the news from the balcony of the German hospital where he is being treated and debriefed, after telephoning both families yesterday. He told Mr McCarthy's friend Miss Jill Morrell that the hostages were being held blindfolded and chained to radiators most of the time, but that Mr McCarthy was keeping fit doing press-ups and squat-thrusts.

Hopes of securing their early release received an immediate setback, however, when the Home Office announced the deportation of and Iranian student held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The Iranian news agency INRA said the move showed Britain's hostility, adding: "Ironically, London has repeatedly asked the Islamic Republic of Iran to help to secure release of British hostages in Lebanon."

Senior British Government

sources hailed the information given by Mr Reed as "enormously helpful and encouraging", but reaffirmed that the Government would not do any deals to free the hostages. No special diplomatic initiative was planned, although the Foreign Office is sending an official to Wiesbaden to take part in Mr Reed's debriefing.

Miss Morrell yesterday demanded that the Government drop its refusal to talk to Iran and Syria, who played a key role in the release of two American hostages in the past two weeks. "It shows that if you do talk to the Syrians and do discuss things with the Iranians you can get somewhere," she said. President Bush has thanked both countries for their help, making it more difficult for London to continue insisting on preconditions for talks.

Mr Chris Pearson, president of the Friends of John McCarthy, said: "It is now up to the Foreign Office to go hell for leather: let's get the hostages out."

The Government is also coming under pressure in Westminster, where Sir David Steel, the Liberal Democrats' foreign affairs spokesman, said Britain should do more to associate itself with American efforts and seek the resumption of diplomatic relations with those countries that could help. Mr Gerald Kaufman, the shadow Foreign Secretary, called for "clear reassurance that the Government is taking active steps which will result in the release of the British hostages".

Mr Gerard Collins, the Irish Foreign Minister, welcomed the news that Mr Keenan—who holds dual British and Irish nationality—was alive, and said that he had met the Iranian Foreign Minister Dr Velayati last week. Dr Velayati had hopes of securing Mr Keenan's early release, but Mr Collins would not speculate on a definition of "early".

Mr Reed said he knew nothing about the fate of the other two British hostages, Mr Terry Waite, the Archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy, or Mr Jack Mann, a retired pilot. He had spent nearly two years with the Americans Mr Terry Anderson and Mr Tom Sutherland, but had not seen them for some time. He had assumed they had been freed and said he was angry and embarrassed to be released before them.

Mr Reed's wife, Fifi, said her husband had described how sometimes up to six hostages were together at the same time, while at other times they were kept on their

own. He had been in the same room as Mr McCarthy, aged 33, and Mr Keenan, aged 39, since October.

Miss Morrell, who spoke to Mr Reed in a three-way telephone link with Mr McCarthy's father, Patrick, said: "He said John was in good health and good spirits. As far as his captors could be, they are quite good. He is not being tortured." Mr McCarthy had seen messages of support in Lebanese newspapers. "We will be carrying on the campaign and will continue to send him messages which will keep him going until we see him on that balcony (the Wiesbaden hospital balcony)," Miss Morrell said.

But the campaigners' elation was tinged with fear. Mr Thomas McCarthy said from his home at Cornish Hall End, Essex: "Mr Reed told me point blank that hostages would be punished if certain information came out."

Besides the absence of clues as to where the hostages were held, it remained unclear last night whether their captors were "Islamic Dawn", the organization which announced Mr Reed's release.

The Iranian student deported yesterday was named by IRNA as Mr Manouchehr Fardavi Ardestani, a graduate mechanical engineering student in Manchester. Home Office officials refused to comment on speculation that his expulsion was linked with the death sentence passed on the author Salman Rushdie over his book *The Satanic Verses*.

On his arrival in Tehran, Mr Ardestani called for the release of Mehdi Karubi, who was one of four Iranian students arrested last December and later charged with an arson attack on a London bookshop. This was not the first hint given by Iran that Karubi's release would be among its key demands should any talks be held.

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Mr Reed: Shouted news from hospital balcony

Mugger snatches a 'worthless' £290m

By David Sapped

A ROBBER snatched a briefcase containing more than £290 million in negotiable bonds from a City of London messenger in what is believed to be a world record for a mugging. But the mugger stands to make not a penny.

Within an hour of the attack, the Bank of England flashed a warning on the City's market dealing screens detailing the stolen documents. The mugger, in his late twenties and dressed in a brown leather bomber-jacket, at-

Details, page 3



Hopeful beginnings: President de Klerk and Mr Mandela before their talks at a mansion in suburban Cape Town

Mandela to meet Thatcher on July 4

By Michael Knipe
Diplomatic Correspondent

AS THE African National Congress began its first formal talks with the South African Government yesterday, it was announced that Mr Nelson Mandela, the organization's deputy president, has at last agreed to talk to Mrs Thatcher.

There was a mood of cautious hope as the Pretoria and ANC teams gathered in Cape Town for talks aimed at resolving the barriers to the destruction of apartheid.

Mrs Thatcher's meeting with Mr Mandela will be at Downing Street on July 4, the Prime Minister's office confirmed yesterday. He will arrive in Britain on July 3, and will also have talks with Mr Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary. Before coming to Britain he will have discussions with Mr Charles Haughey, the Irish Prime Minister, in Dublin.

The ANC leader's visit will be his second to Britain since his release from 27 years' imprisonment on February 11, but it will be the first time he has formal discussions with the Government. He met Mr Hurd briefly and informally at a dinner in Windhoek in March during the Namibian independence celebrations.

But then, and again when he visited London at Easter to attend a rock concert celebrating his release, he had no contacts with British officials, despite the Government's clear readiness for a meeting.

Mr Mandela's refusal to meet Mrs Thatcher was meant as a rebuke over her opposition to increased sanctions against South Africa and her speedy decision unilaterally to lift some of the modest British measures against Pretoria. The Prime Minister pressed for Mr Mandela's release, and said she would not visit South Africa until he was free.

Talks optimism, page 9

Soviet call for treaty to end war 'a ploy'

By Andrew McEwen, Diplomatic Editor

THE Soviet Union is to call for a formal peace treaty to end the Second World War when the two Germanies and the four wartime Allies hold their first meeting at ministerial level on Saturday in Bonn.

The demand will be opposed by the other five countries, which see it as impractical because up to 57 countries could, in theory, demand to be involved in peace talks.

The Western Allies hope Moscow will eventually back down, but fear it could cause a serious delay in the talks, which Bonn is anxious to complete quickly. The West German coalition's prospects in the December federal elections are thought to depend partly on sustaining a rapid pace towards reunification.

It could also throw into disarray discussions which

Bonn and East Berlin are holding on the possibility of putting off the federal elections so that they can be combined with all-German elections early next year.

Moscow's demand appears to be part of a Soviet tactic to slow down the talks, reflecting fears that German reunification is rushing ahead out of control. But Moscow also appears to have a wider strategy. It is probably no coincidence that it has introduced complications in two sets of arms control talks, on conventional arms and on an "open skies" treaty.

A linkage between the different strands of Soviet policy was hinted at by the Soviet delegation at a preparatory meeting of the "two plus four" talks in East Berlin on Monday. The Soviet delegation tried to introduce two new

items in the agenda for Saturday's meeting in Bonn. It called the first of these "the synchronization of German unity with the all-European process". The second would deal with Germany's "international obligations".

Moscow found no support from East Germany or the four Western Allies—the United States, West Germany, Britain and France—but did not withdraw its proposals.

The West agrees with Moscow that the talks need to be set against the wider background of the changes in Eastern Europe and the possibility of a "new architecture" in which the two military alliances might change in

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Kremlin fears, page 8
Leading article, page 13
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Cautious Labour 'happy with 200 gains'

By Robin Oakley
Political Editor

CONSERVATIVES could end up holding fewer than a fifth of the 5,327 seats at stake in today's local elections if opinion poll trends are reflected in voting.

There have been predictions of the loss of 600 seats from an already low base and if the key London boroughs of Westminster and Wandsworth and the northern city of Bradford, all key examples of Thatcherite policies in action, fall to Labour, the pressure on Mrs Thatcher's leadership will intensify, with bad inflation figures on the way next week.

But yesterday Mr Kenneth Baker, the Conservative Party chairman, said that the two London boroughs, which have the lowest poll tax at £195 and £148 respectively, would both remain Conservative.

An NOP poll in Westminster, for the London Evening Standard, showed Conservatives at 42 per cent and Labour 48 per cent, compared with voting at the last borough elections in 1986 of Tories 42.5 per cent and Labour 38.7. In Wandsworth the figures were Conservatives 45 per cent and Labour 48 per cent, compared with 44.7 per cent and 43.4 in 1986.

Conservative Central Office has grown optimistic in the past few days that the nationwide damage may not be as bad as once expected. Labour was cautious. Dr Jack Cunningham, the party's campaign co-ordinator, refused to predict success for his party in either Westminster or Wandsworth, saying that both contests were too close to call.

He said he would be delighted if Labour managed 200 gains overall, despite his belief that the poll tax controversy would considerably increase turnout, as it had in recent local government by-elections consistently won by them.

Labour, which has sought to make the council election campaign a national referendum on Mrs Thatcher and her policies, as well as a verdict on the popularity of the poll tax, yesterday accused the Prime Minister of ducking the contest.

Mr Neil Kinnock said that she had been unusually quiet during a contest which was the first national verdict on the poll tax. Dr Cunningham said that the Prime Minister had been "conspicuous by her absence".

Poll tax the key, page 4
Thatcher factor, page 4
Ronald Butt, page 12
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EC acts on big airlines

The European Commission yesterday declared that it is seeking powers to crack down more swiftly on big airlines using predatory tactics to squeeze out smaller rivals in the European market. Brussels wants to be able to order airlines to suspend "unfair" operations immediately rather than having to wait up to four months for the full legal procedures to run their course.

This would mean that the Commission could act within three weeks of a complaint being received. The Commission said predatory tactics included suddenly operating much higher capacity on routes, charging fares well below costs and offering passenger benefits such as frequent flier points.

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Bills scandal

Overcharging by gas, water, electricity and telephone utilities is costing businesses, local health authorities, councils and government departments many millions of pounds a year in excessive bills, experts say.

Page 2

Virgin slander

A Pakistani bride whose husband said she was not a virgin at marriage won £20,000 slander damages in the High Court in London under a rarely invoked 19th century statute.

Page 22

Green housing

Tests on a unique design that will provide solar space and water heating for a house even in Britain's minimal exposure to sunlight, are about to take place. The system could play a large role in countering the greenhouse effect.

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Local councils told to spend, spend, spend

From Joe Joseph
Tokyo

THEY do things a little differently in Japan. As Mrs Thatcher braces for a national backlash against the poll tax in today's local elections, ratepayers here are busy working out how to squander billions of yen foisted on them by the Liberal Democratic Government.

The only proviso they have been given is not to spend it too seriously. Forget new town halls or more efficient sewers, they were told. Be imaginative.

Japan's local governments and village elders have taken the Government at its word. One backwater in Yamaguchi, central Japan, is going to invite 3,000 residents to view their village from a helicopter. Another, in Miyagi, northern Japan, wants to build the country's biggest water wheel. The world's largest gold bar has been forged. The world's

biggest hourglass, holding one tonne of sand, is on order. Japan's biggest wisteria trellis is being lashed together. Rate-capping is not a concept much mentioned.

The scheme was the brainchild of Mr Noboru Takeshita, the former Prime Minister who stepped down last year over his links to the Recruit scandal. The common practice of keeping the voters sweet has resulted in glamorous concert halls for grim villages and passengerless bullet trains for remote rural havens. Such cultivation of constituents has helped to keep the Liberal Democrats in power for 35 years.

Mr Takeshita's parting gesture before handing over the reins of power was to offer every city, town and village across the country 100 million yen (£384,615) each to squander as they saw fit. There are 3,268 such local administrations.

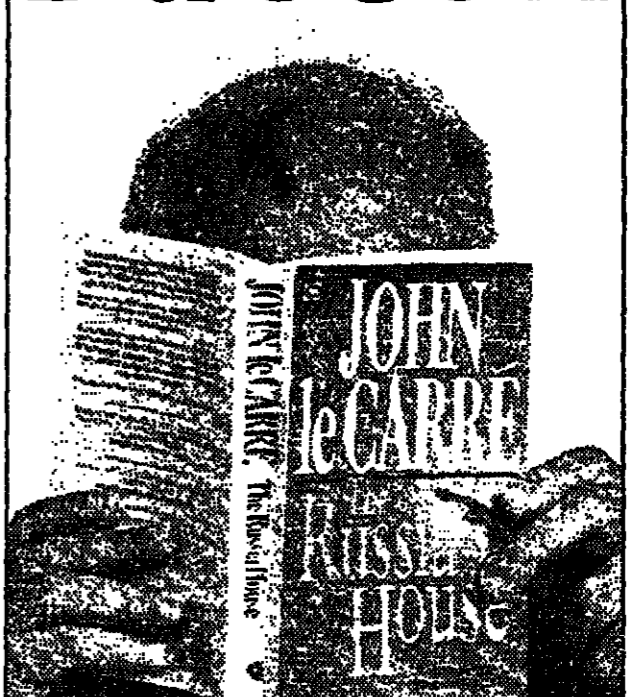
The aim was to revitalize regional areas, but critics say giving 100 million yen to every local body, however small, is throwing money away.

Awashimura-mura, a village in the rice-growing district of Niigata, is financing a poster campaign to promote the village, and hopes the publicity will lure potential wives for lonely farmers.

Two local authorities are putting fax machines in every villager's home to speed up delivery of neighbourhood announcements. Hakui, a small town on the Japan Sea coast, is building a museum shaped like a flying saucer: it says it wants to become "Japan's UFO mecca".

The generous handout will do no harm to Mr Takeshita's ambitions. Still Japan's most powerful politician, he has made it known that he would not mind being Prime Minister again.

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Overcharging by utilities 'burdens business and public services'

By Nick Nuttall
Technology Correspondent

WIDESPREAD overcharging by gas, water, electricity and telephone utilities is costing businesses, local health authorities, councils and government departments many millions of pounds a year in excessive bills, it is being claimed.

Some are paying for more units or calls than have been used because of accounting and computing errors. Others, eligible for cheaper tariffs, are being billed at higher rates because of administrative oversights and an unwillingness to make customers aware that they qualify.

Industry experts say that there are indications that privatization has aggra-

vated the scale of the problem as area offices attempt to implement new pricing policies and regulations, wider ranges of services and more varied ways of customer billing.

Last week, the Telecommunication Managers' Association disclosed that nearly 90 per cent of companies questioned said that they had been overcharged during the previous year by British Telecom.

The findings emerge from an analysis by the Inenco Group, a company specializing in utility debt recovery, which numbers many big organizations among its 3,500 clients, including brewers, publishers, health authorities and DIY chains.

Mr Phil McVan, Inenco's general

manager, said that over the past 12 months, £1.2 million of the £6 million recovered for clients was for direct overcharging. Generally, the cases involved customers being billed for more calls or units than they had used.

Of the £1.2 million recovered, £800,000 came from telephone bills and £400,000 from water and energy-related bills.

Mr McVan said: "In water, charges are raised by water companies and also by water authorities in isolation. Because the administrative systems are not so smart, errors can occur."

There are also cases where customers have meters that calculate in old imperial units, whereas the central meters at the utility are metric. That,

too, can lead to excessive and inaccurate bills, the firm has found.

Five years ago, Inenco was recovering an annual average of £1,000 a client for overcharging, said Mr McVan, but this had grown to £5,000 a year. He said that with telephone accounts, debt recovery growth had been "phenomenal", with recovery rising 490 per cent over the five years since privatization.

The problem can also affect private telephone bills. Yesterday, it emerged that Maureen Lipman, who plays Beattie in BT's television commercials, was overcharged and threatened with being cut off on her car telephone bill after what the company admitted was a computing error.

The remaining 80 per cent of debt

recovery by Inenco on behalf of utility customers comes from so-called "grey areas", including cases where clients have been charged at high rates when they were eligible for lower tariffs.

Mr McVan said: "The utilities tell us that the customer is responsible for his choice. In our view, if there is choice, and one rate is cheaper than another, this is an overcharge."

Even when utilities decide that it is in their interests to tell customers of discounts, administrative errors could occur. Over the past few days, several clients with potential electricity rebates of between £5,000 and £40,000 have been identified. In the run-up to privatization, area electricity boards have been competing to keep some

business customers by offering reductions. However, poor record-keeping has led to some of these customers being overlooked, according to Mr McVan.

Inenco says that organizations that once rubber-stamped bills are now consulting recovery firms, with health authorities, wishing to conserve funds for patient care, referring accounts.

A spokesman for BT said that, given the accuracy of its call-charging equipment, bill errors were rare. If there had been growth in debt recovery on telephone bills, the mistakes were probably due to installation fee errors. It was rapid growth in telecommunications and re-organizations in the City of London that had made it difficult to keep records up to date, rather than privatization.

Civil Service staff 'told to smash police by Militant'

By Tim Jones, Employment Affairs Correspondent

MINISTERS are studying a document backed by supporters of the Militant Tendency that exhorted union members to attend the March 31 anti-poll tax demonstration and "smash Thatcher and her police force".

Mr Tommy Sheridan and Mr Steve Nally, Militant members and leaders of the Anti-Poll Tax Federation, have publicly condemned the violence, looting and burning that took place as police battled with rioters in the West End of London.

The document, which ministers now have in their possession, shows that members of Britain's biggest civil service union were exhorted to attend the demonstration and urged to support a campaign

of mass non-payment of the community charge. The document, circulated to branches of the Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA), also instructs union members to refuse to carry out their statutory duties in implementing poll tax legislation.

Leaders of the 150,000 strong union, which represents mainly lower paid workers, are convinced the document which, in contravention of the law does not bear a publisher's name, is part of a hard-left campaign to recapture control of the ruling national executive committee.

Militant Tendency regards the union as the "jewel in the crown" of its influence in the trade union movement; it is working to regain control in the elections for the executive that are under way at present. At least 15 of the 26 Broad Left candidates standing in the election are Militant supporters and others have hard-left views unwelcome in the Labour Party.

Mrs Marion Chambers, the union's moderate president, said: "If Militants get control of this union again, the Government can look forward to further political warfare." The union's present leadership is opposed to the poll tax, but is unwilling to sanction any action that is unlawful.

Two years ago, when Militant was in control of the union, it exhorted industrial action within government departments and gave effective political control to Mr John Macgregor, a Militant supporter, by appointing him to the General Council of the Trade Union Congress, where, on at least one occasion, he called for a general strike.

The national executive committee give "full support to a campaign of mass non-payment and organize members to stop deductions from benefits". It says: "CPSA members, along with the rest of the trade union movement, can play a vital role in defeating the poll tax. Our union leaders should be leading the campaign for mass non-payment. Such a call would find a tremendous echo amongst the members."

In his election address, Mr Chris Baugh, one of the candidates for a seat on the executive, says: "I am a Labour Party member associated with Militant and support the campaign for mass non-payment of the poll tax. Opponents and the press will misrepresent my policies. I ask you to judge me by my record and vote for change."

There has been an inter-union war between the hard left and moderates in the union. Mr John Ellis, the union's moderate general secretary, remains the only leader of a large union who does not have a "company car". It was taken away from him when the hard left were in control.

More recently, Militant members in the union's key Department of Health and Social Security office in Newcastle upon Tyne were expelled after a tribunal report found them "guilty" of using the union's resources to produce Broad Left material.

Poll tax squabble, page 4

No new law to fight class thugs

Teachers will not get legal backing to sue the parents of young classroom thugs, it was announced yesterday.

Mr John MacGregor, Secretary of State for Education, in a parliamentary answer, ruled out making parents responsible in civil law for children who attack teachers or vandalize classrooms. Legal backing for teachers' authority was also dismissed.

Teaching unions criticized the move, saying teachers needed more support to combat classroom violence.

The decisions came after the inquiry into school discipline headed by Lord Elton which last year urged the Government to explore possible legislation. There was concern that criminal law does not cover children under 10.

Bomber crash

An American F-111 fighter-bomber aircraft from Lakenheath, Suffolk, crashed close to the Norfolk village of Binham yesterday, showering houses with wreckage. No one was hurt and the two man crew ejected safely.

Killer detained

Kevin Doherty, aged 13, who stabbed another boy to death, was yesterday ordered by Lord Allanbridge, at the High Court in Edinburgh, to be detained for five years. Doherty, of Blantyre, Lanarkshire, was found guilty at the High Court in Airdrie of the culpable homicide of Stuart Thomson, also 13.

Bomb victim

A civilian filter employed by the Ministry of Defence is believed to have lost both legs yesterday when a boot-trapped bomb exploded beneath the Territorial Army vehicle he was driving in Lisburn, Co. Antrim. The mechanic is critically ill in the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast.

Pay warning

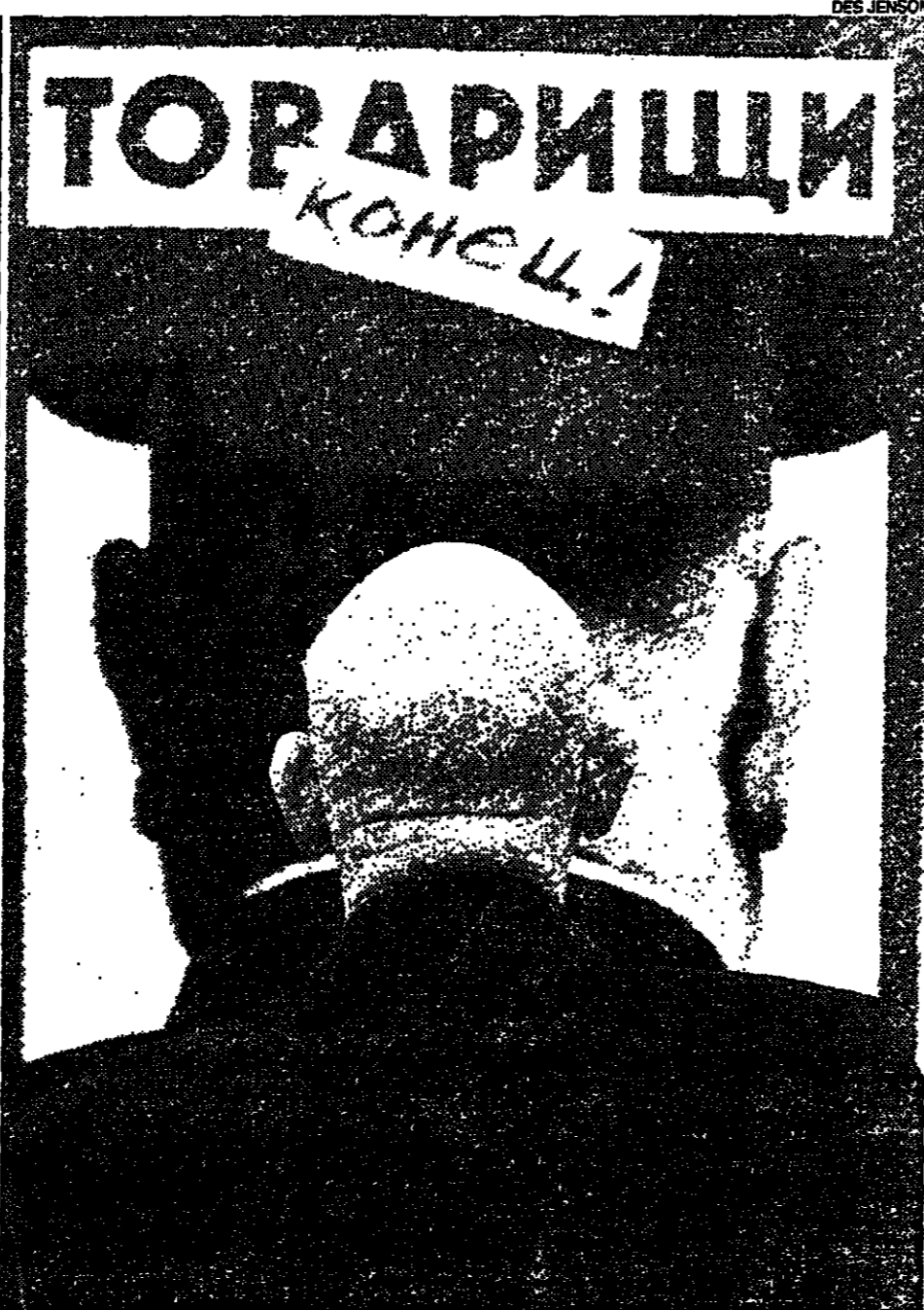
The Association of First Division Civil Servants presented a pay claim yesterday of 12 per cent for junior entrants to the "fast stream". The union said the Civil Service faced a deepening recruitment crisis unless graduate entrants were paid salaries comparable to those in the private sector.

Museum talks

Dr Neil Chalmers, director of the Natural History Museum in London, is to meet union representatives this morning in the hope of averting a further one-day strike tomorrow over the proposed loss of 100 posts. Letters, page 13

CORRECTION

The Hungarian State Opera Company was to have been brought to Britain by the London Festival of Opera, not the London International Opera Festival as reported on April 11.



Comrades' farewell: A poster celebrating the departure from Hungary of the KGB along with Russian forces comes under surveillance at an exhibition of political posters from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union which opened yesterday at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Piracy law would halt decoder use

By John Lewis, Political Staff

A PIRACY law to stop viewers using decoders to pick up films and other satellite broadcasts from abroad without paying for them is being drawn up by the Government.

Mr David Mellor, minister responsible for broadcasting, said yesterday that he was considering proposals to strengthen the law as there was concern by British satellite broadcasters that the present controls were too weak.

He said Film Net, a satellite service from Benelux countries, showing English language films mainly to Scandinavia was easily "locked into" with the help of decoders. It was estimated that 20 to 30 per cent of those with Astra satellite dishes also had decoders capable of breaking into Film Net channels and allowing viewers to watch them for nothing.

Often films being shown were the same as those being shown by BSB and Sky, which offer pay services in Britain. That was unfair.

Mr Mellor said British television services were already protected under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. The initial thinking was that the protection should not be extended to other countries, except on a reciprocal basis. "We regard it as essential that broadcasters should be protected against piracy. This Government is committed to a policy of opening up greater choice in broadcasting, but we must, at the same time, ensure that the proprietary rights of the broadcasters are protected. We are determined that the development of a healthy television industry should not be damaged by

piracy." Mr Mellor said. The new law was likely to act against those who sold or distributed the decoders. The intention was to amend the Broadcasting Bill, which expected to begin its report stage in the Commons for two and a half days next week. The amendment would be tabled in the Lords.

Mr Mellor, who revealed that the Government was to put down 500 amendments to the Bill, also disclosed that he was considering the scrapping of performance bonds. The bonds were to ensure that companies awarded new franchises in 1993 lived up to their promises on quality.

The minister said the Government had been in danger of scoring an own goal by making it easier to pay fines through insurance. This had been put right in the Committee Stage of the Bill, but he was now looking to see if the performance bonds were "robust" enough to do the job for which they were intended or whether they should be replaced by an extra heavy fine.

If performance bonds remained and a television company faced bankruptcy, the Treasury might become a preferential creditor when there was no reason why it should be. What might be simpler, when it was a question of terminating a franchise, would be to impose a heavy fine, perhaps the equivalent of 7 per cent of turnover.

This would be a substantial additional penalty if the licence had to be removed, but it would give the Independent Television Commission discretion if it felt the company was not wholly at fault.

Spencer vision sold for £1.3m

By John Shaw

STANLEY Spencer's prices reached new heights yesterday as a Crucifixion scene set in Cookham High Street, Berkshire, made £1,320,000 at Sotheby's in London.

It was a new record for the artist whose visionary pictures have been increasingly sought at auction. The painting, appearing on the market for the first time, was the top lot in a modern British picture sale which made £3,583,635 (17 per cent unsold).

The study was commissioned from Spencer for the chapel at Aldenham School, Hertfordshire. It was bought by Mr Ivor Braka, a London dealer. He said: "I think this particular picture is one of the most dramatic post-war paintings produced in England."

A celebrated love affair between Sir William Orpen and Yvonne Aubig, daughter of the Mayor of Lille, whom he met while an official war artist in 1917, was recalled in a sensuous nude, "Early Morning", which made another artist's record of £319,000 (£100,000-150,000).

It showed her sitting cross-legged on the floor. Orpen passed off his two earliest pictures of her as portraits of a German spy in order to justify them to the War Office. She acquired overnight fame even after the truth emerged that she was the artist's mistress.

There were seven other artist's records in the sale, including those for Rodric O'Connor (£143,000); Sickert (£77,000); William Roberts (£82,500); and Jack Butler Yeats (£77,000).

BRITISH HOSTAGES

McCarthy fit and well freed captive says

By David Sapsted

A TELEPHONE call shortly before 10am yesterday gave the Friends of John McCarthy in London the news that they had waited four years to hear.

The caller, from a United States base in Wiesbaden, West Germany, was Mr Frank Reed, released by his Lebanese captors barely 48 hours earlier. His message was simple: he had seen Mr John McCarthy and Mr Brian Keenan alive and reasonably well last Saturday.

Ms Joan Willows, one of the campaigners staffing the office at the headquarters of the National Union of Journalists, said: "We have had a few false reports in the last few years but this was an astonishing experience to be in an office and receive the first positive news that John is alive."

Mr Reed said he saw the

two men last Saturday night. They seem to have been held together for a long time. John has grown a beard. He does loads of exercises every day - squat thrusts and push ups; and he reads a lot.

As far as his captors could be they are quite good. He is not being tortured though he has, apparently, had some minor health problems," she said.

Later, Mr Reed spoke to Mr Patrick McCarthy, John's father, and Miss Jill Morrell, his long-time friend and journalistic colleague.

Miss Morrell, who has led the campaign for Mr McCarthy's release, said: "It is absolutely fantastic - it's the best news we have had. I can hardly believe it. I don't quite know what to do about it."

Mr Reed told her Mr McCarthy was being kept blind-

folded most of the time. "He said John was in good health and good spirits and as well as can be expected really. He said John is taking advantage of the time they get to exercise in the mornings and keeps himself fit," she said.

"He had seen John as recently as a few days ago, and had been with him for quite a long time. John was in good health and good spirits. This is the first strong news we have had of him. It is fantastic."

Mr Patrick McCarthy said after his conversation with Mr Reed that he was now cautiously optimistic that his journalist son, taken hostage four years ago, would eventually be released.

"This is the only first-hand news we have ever had of John," Mr McCarthy, of Cornish Hall End, near Saffron Walden, Essex, said.

Extrovert broke security rule on day of departure

By Nicholas Beeston

MR JOHN McCarthy may be closer to freedom today than at any time since his abduction. For his colleagues in Beirut and London, however, there is little hope that the fresh-faced young television reporter who disappeared more than four years ago will be the same person who one day emerges from captivity.

It was typical of Mr McCarthy that he should have insisted on a warm farewell with the Lebanese he had befriended in his first assignment abroad when he set off in April 1986 for Beirut International Airport. It was just as typical of Beirut that in his last hour he was betrayed to the kidnappers.

Mr McCarthy had arrived in Beirut in the spring of 1986 on his first foreign assignment, standing in for the bureau chief of Worldwide Television News. "He is an adventurous sort, good-humoured and slightly extrovert," his father, Mr Patrick McCarthy, said. "He was all agog and very much looking forward to going to Beirut."

Within days of his arrival his boyish smile was a familiar sight at the militia chiefs' press conferences as well as the restaurants and bars frequented by the shrinking foreign press corps.

Like most newcomers to Lebanon, Mr McCarthy found himself seduced by its beauty, the hospitality of its people and the excitement of covering the war. He telephoned his parents that Beirut was not the horror story he had read about before the trip, but a surprisingly normal city and occasionally "quite monotonous".

What neither he nor the other British journalists could foresee was the very real

danger they became exposed to on April 16 when US F-111s bombed Tripoli from bases in Britain.

Within hours of the news reaching the streets of Beirut, Libyan-backed groups had put a price on the head of every British male. Freelance kidnappers scoured the notorious airport road for Western faces and attempted to kidnap another British journalist outside Mr McCarthy's hotel.

Mr McCarthy, who had been ordered home for his safety by WTN, broke one of the foremost security rules by bidding goodbye to his friends, the staff of the Commodore Hotel near by and the drivers just before he set off in a two-car convoy to catch his flight. His drivers took the

precaution of following backstreets and avoiding the main routes leading to the airport where he might get recognized as a foreigner at one of the many checkpoints.

He had been travelling only a few minutes, however, when the car was intercepted outside the ruins of the old Spinneys supermarket. Someone with a walkie-talkie had witnessed Mr McCarthy's last act of kindness and his preparations to leave and tipped off the accomplices.

It is suspected that the men who pointed their automatic rifles at him and hustled him into the car were freelancers who planned to resell Mr McCarthy to his present captors, believed to be Iranian-backed Shia Muslims.

Irishman safe who forgot passport

existence and independence from Britain.

No Middle East government had a political disagreement with Dublin and his kidnappers could not expect to receive anything in return for his release. It was probable that the gunman who kidnapped Mr Keenan had mistaken him for a British citizen.

Two weeks earlier, two of his British colleagues, Mr Leigh Douglas and Mr Philip Padfield, had been abducted in a similar fashion.

Any hope of a speedy release was shattered five days later when US Air Force bombers raided Libya and an open season was declared in Beirut on all Westerners, particularly Britons and Americans.

Mr Douglas, Mr Padfield and an American librarian were killed. Mr John McCarthy, the British television journalist with whom he was destined to spend much of his time in captivity, was seized as he made his way to the airport.

Yesterday's announcement by Mr Frank Reed, the released American hostage, that he spent most of his three years in captivity with Mr Keenan and that he last saw him on Saturday, is the confirmation his family has been waiting for.



Mr McCarthy: Betrayed to freelance kidnappers



Mr Brian Keenan: Held for four years

Slander award boosts Asian women's equal rights struggle

By Tom Giles

MEMBERS of Britain's Asian community last night welcomed the High Court's decision in awarding slander damages to a Pakistani bride whose husband had accused her of being not a virgin at marriage. They claimed it would provide a test case for women struggling for greater independence against traditional marital values.

"This is a very positive decision, which will encourage many Asian women," Ms Geeta Amin, an Asian community worker in Ealing, west London, said. "It will be a great incentive to lots of younger women across the Asian community, not just Pakistani as in this

case, who wish to oppose their circumstances."

However, for many Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women living in Britain, accusations of a premarital relationship can still bring shame upon them and cast a shadow over the social standing of their families. Caught uncomfortably between two cultures, many have to measure new social expectations against values which, in European terms, can seem decidedly archaic.

"Many Asian women here are still fundamentally oppressed," Mrs Sudrashan Abrol, who runs an advice centre in Birmingham for Asian women, said. "But there is a

great culture clash for them when they live in a society in which sex is promoted everywhere." She added: "The girls are so protected at home - going to single sex schools and often being forbidden to go out by themselves - that most never have anything to do with boys before they are married. But if the girl gets pregnant before marriage, there's no pardon for it and it's a social stigma that leads many girls to run away from home. It's a very stressful situation."

Although such religious constraints are multi-denominational, the rigour with which they are imposed varies from each community, albeit Hindu, Muslim or Sikh.

Mrs Habrol, who is 30, emigrated to a Birmingham from the Punjab in 1963. Since then she has found many women in her area, which is predominantly Sikh, are under strong pressure to conform to traditions of arranged marriages.

A fixed dowry must be paid to the groom's parents, fundamental importance is attached to the virginity of wives and marriage outside one's caste or religion is frowned upon. "When the men have an affair with an English woman, no-one condemns it. But if a woman goes out with another, it is condemned and she is in disgrace. The man cannot be proved to be a virgin, but the

woman has to be. "I have at least two girls coming into my office every day because of problems with their arranged marriage or with domestic violence."

However, Mrs Tara Kothari, a founding member of the UK Asian Women's Conference, said that attitudes to exogamy were more flexible in her own Hindu community in north London. "My family is from the Gujarat region of India. In my part of the world there not much pressure on the girl. If she wanted to marry an outsider we would let her, but it would still be very poorly thought of if she had a pre-marital relationship."

One of Mrs Kothari's daughters

has married an Englishman and been through a British university, but she is still conscious that the pressures upon those from other Asian communities, especially Muslim. She described attitudes among many muslim families from Pakistan, as "fanatical".

Another woman who runs a refuge for Asian girls in Birmingham said the problem lay in their economic reliance upon their families. "Most Asian women rely on society and their family, but when they are economically free they will begin to stand up for their rights. This case will encourage them. We are trying to give them the confidence to do this."

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Secrecy at police hearings criticized

By Stewart Tandler, Crime Correspondent

POLICE disciplinary hearings are surrounded by too much secrecy, leaving complainants and the public unaware of the punishment meted out to erring officers, the Police Complaints Authority said yesterday.

A complainant may be allowed to give evidence to a hearing but will be excluded once a finding of guilty or innocence has been found. The authority, in its report for 1989, noted: "As a result the process gives the appearance of being shrouded in mystery which detracts from the credibility of the system."

Most forces, the authority said, merely said that suitable action would be taken and the report itself was sometimes surprised by the results of hearings. It noted: "If we with our special knowledge of cases are mystified, it is not surprising that complainants and others are as well."

Forces helped the authority by providing details of disciplinary decisions, but one force took secrecy to the point, the report said, that it "positively resented any attempt at finding out what transpired". The authority did not identify the force.

The report also had strong

Poor crime clear-up rate dents confidence

By David Young

FOUR out of five people are generally satisfied with the way the police do their job, according to a survey by the Consumers' Association magazine *Which?* More than half the people who took part, however, say that they think police tend to discriminate against certain groups, most say that the police need to improve their image and a third say they doubt the fairness of police investigations and the police complaints procedure.

More than a third of the 3,600 people in the survey had had personal contact with the police in the past two years, in half of the cases through reporting incidents such as burglary, vandalism, car theft or an accident. Of those, three-quarters were satisfied with the way they were treated, but the others said they were disappointed.

The most common reason given for disappointment was that the police did not seem to do anything. Most were dissatisfied because no culprits were caught and no stolen property was recovered. One in six of those dissatisfied said that they felt that way because they did not receive any follow-up information from the police or because they felt the police were not interested.

Which also reports that many private pay phones in public houses, shops and restaurants are flouting official rules with hidden charges. Some owners profit by charging calls at three times the British Telecom rate, the association found.

It said that OfTel, the government watchdog body for the industry, said two years ago that private pay phones would give a better service and more choice. Owners must display the call rate and a contact in case of complaints, but a survey by Which found rules being broken. Of 12 phones tested, four gave less than the 80 seconds a BT pay phone gives for 10p for a cheap rate local call. One private pay phone gave 25 seconds for 10p.

Leading article, page 13

words and doubts about the way disciplinary cases were presented, saying that some cases were not presented as vigorously as the authority believed they should be and that in others the facts were presented "the way the police see them rather than the way that we representing the public see them".

The report, which disclosed a 14 per cent increase in cases referred to the authority last year for possible supervision and an 11 per cent increase in cases reported for a review of disciplinary action, also expressed anxiety about whether detectives were honouring codes of conduct for handling suspects under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

The codes have been in force for four years but the report noted detectives investigating serious crimes were tempted to pay less than full attention to them. They cover areas such as the right of access to lawyers and lay out the position of the suspect in custody. But the report concluded that detectives may treat the codes as mere administrative guidance, although breaches are a disciplinary offence.

Commenting on the report, Judge Petre, the chairman, said the increase in cases showed greater trust by the public in the complaints system. At the same time more cases were being referred to the authority by the police for supervision even though they were not always required to do so.

Asked if the increases reflected growing disillusionment with the police and the crisis of public confidence, the judge said statistics were always difficult to assess.

The report dismissed suggestions that an independent investigation arm should be created and the judge said: "The present system is a good one because it combines exactly what the public needs."

The judge said that the authority had expressed its support for the release of complainants' statements to complainants. Those are now kept by the police.

The judge said that more than 60 per cent of complaints made against police officers were dealt with informally or withdrawn before they were ever investigated by the police or examined in supervised cases by the authority.

The report showed that in 1989 the authority had 5,008 cases referred to it for a decision on whether they should be supervised by the PCA. That was a 14 per cent increase on 4,397 cases in 1988. The authority began supervising 879 cases compared with 804 in 1988.

Last year the authority recommended 53 disciplinary charges in 20 cases where the deputy chief officer who had been dealing with the case had initially recommended no disciplinary charges. Twenty-six charges were eventually proved.

The Police Complaints Authority said the investigation of allegations against officers from the former West Midlands Serious Crime Squad has become so large that extra staff may have to be recruited.



Judge Petre: "Public has trust over complaints"



The Flying Scotsman marking its return to British tracks at Didcot Station, Oxfordshire, after its tour of Australia in 1988 and 1989, when it made a record non-stop run of 422 miles between Melbourne and Alice Springs. Yesterday it took the press and VIPs on a trip to Banbury

'Opportunist' snatches £291m in paper money

By David Sapsted

A MUGGER escaped with more than £290 million in negotiable bonds yesterday after attacking a money broker's messenger in the City of London. The perpetrator stands to make not a penny from the crime, however.

Within the hour, the Bank of England had flashed a warning on the City's market dealing screens detailing the documents stolen. The message said: "There may be an attempt to present these certificates, and bona fides should be extremely carefully checked, with all precautions taken."

The mugger, in his late twenties and dressed in a brown leather bomber jacket, attacked Mr John Goddard, aged 58, an employee of Sheppard's money brokers, at about 9.30am in Nicholas Lane, a quiet side street off Cannon Street. The man held a knife to his throat and demanded money before taking the briefcase. In it were certificates of deposit valued at £121.9 million and Treasury bills worth £170 million.

City of London detectives and officials of the Bank of England said last night they believed the robber was purely an opportunist: "If anyone

wanted to use these certificates in the money markets, they would have had to have done so very soon after the crime. We have no evidence that that happened," a City detective said.

The Bank of England has plans for a Central Money Markets Office to be established later this year to enable such paper money transactions to be carried out on computer, obviating the need for messengers.

There are only three ways the certificates of deposit and Treasury bills could be turned into cash: by waiting for them to mature; by selling them on the market; or by borrowing against their collateral value. In the first case, the bills will not now be honoured and, in the last two, the Bank of England believes the professional markets have been sufficiently forewarned.

However, City dealers said neither the certificates, which have a minimum value of £100,000, nor the bills issued by the Bank of England on behalf of the Treasury, were as strictly regulated as the trade in bearer certificates. Had yesterday's robbery been carried out by an organized gang familiar with the money mar-

Chips are up for fast food fans

By Ruth Gledhill

TUCKING into smoked salmon, fish and chips and frozen yoghurt, exhibitors at the fast food show at Wembley said yesterday there was more to takeaways than pizzas and hamburgers.

The industry cheered Mr David Maclean, the food minister, who pointed out that such favourites are rich in protein, vitamins and minerals, but said that to escape the "junk food" image, next year's exhibition would be renamed Bite '91.

Besides the traditional fast foods, visitors could sample smoked gravlax or Japanese-style salmon marinated in ginger from a Dagenham firm, or chicken tikka sandwiches with granary bread from a Sussex couple. The Product Connection sold kettle-cooked

crisps, garlic and cinnamon bagel chips, cheddar popcorn and Klaus Swiss chocolates, and a private exhibit offered a herb and cheese pizza topped with apple, kiwi fruit, mandarins and bananas.

But the most popular stand by far was that selling fish and chips. Mr Ken Arworthy, president of the National Federation of Fish Friers, said the industry had escaped its "wrapped in newspaper" image. It is now possible to study for a City and Guilds certificate in fish frying, and the first 14 will be presented on Tuesday week.

But the one thing that could not be had yesterday was a decent cup of leaf tea - probably because the three-minute brewing time is just not fast enough.

Vets are dismayed by veto on dog register

By Thomson Prentice
Science Correspondent

The British Veterinary Association yesterday said it was "dismayed and disappointed" by the Government's veto of proposals for a dog registration scheme.

Mr John Bower, president of the association, said the scheme could help to prevent some attacks by dogs on children by making the animals' owners more responsible for controlling them.

"We do not understand the Government's opposition to measures which appear to attract wide support throughout the country and which would be to society's general benefit," he said at a news conference in London.

A proposal to introduce the scheme through the Environmental Protection Bill was defeated by 12 votes in the House of Commons on Monday after the Government imposed a three-line whip: 50 Conservative MPs voted in favour, however.

"If it had been a free vote the decision would have gone the other way," Mr Bower said. The registration of dogs would not make the animals safer but would make their owners more responsible. It might help to prevent a dog making a second attack.

The association was against formal moves to restrict or ban certain breeds of dogs, such as Rottweilers. But the importing into Britain of pit bull terriers, which were bred to be aggressive, was regrettable, Mr Bower said. "Any dog that is genetically selected for aggression is unwelcome in this country."

An Alsatian and a Rottweiler which ripped open the face of a girl, aged four, on Monday were yesterday at the home of their owner, Mr Aston Markland, of Dudley, West Midlands, who has been warned by police that he faces a court order to have them destroyed.

Caroline Williams needed 200 stitches in her face. She was attacked as she played in a field near her home. Her mother has called for the dogs to be destroyed.

RETAILERS:
DID YOU RECEIVE THE
SIGNET LETTER?

THEY LEFT OUT THE BEST BIT.

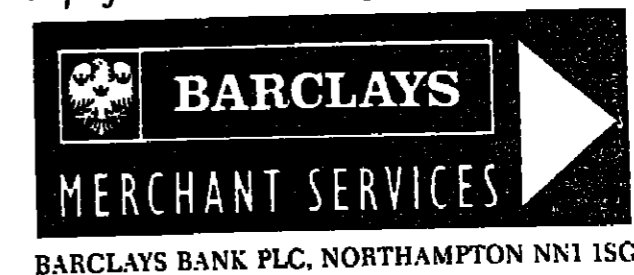
Signet Limited - formerly The Joint Credit Card Company Limited - has written to many retailers withdrawing its services as an acquirer of credit card transactions as from 31st May 1990. They advised retailers to make new arrangements. Now the best bit.

The letter omitted to inform readers that Barclays Merchant Services, the world's largest card processor, already offers the complete service for ALL Visa and MasterCard transactions. And it is available now.

If you have an agreement with Barclays DO NOT SIGN ANOTHER AGREEMENT, as you can benefit from the most experienced processing

service, for all cards mentioned in the Signet letter, without making an arrangement with a new organization.

If you do not already deal with Barclays to handle all your card processing, simply call us on 0345 212 515, between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday and we will arrange everything. It pays to deal Barclays ALL the cards



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Entrepreneurs to start at five

By Douglas Broom, Education Reporter

ENTREPRENEURIAL skills will be instilled into children from the age of five as part of the National Curriculum, Mr John MacGregor, Secretary of State for Education and Science, said yesterday.

As well as basic business studies, pupils will be taught how to be effective consumers and how to organize their personal finances to avoid running into debt.

"Increasingly, our prosperity as a nation will depend on the knowledge, skills and understanding of young people," Mr MacGregor said.

"One good way of developing those qualities is through business and community enterprise projects, which have clear objectives and are integrated into the curriculum."

However, as Mr MacGregor was speaking at the launch of a guidance document for schools on the new approach, produced by the National Curriculum Council, Mr Alastair Graham, director of the Industrial Society, launched a new attack on enterprise education in schools.

At the final of the Student Innovation for Business Award in London, Mr Graham said: "Much of the natural enterprise flair of youngsters is trained out of them by the education system."

Schools should do more to build enterprise into the curriculum and not just treat it as a bolt-on extra, he said. "Much more needs to be done to ensure that the spirit of

enterprise is bedded into the culture of this country."

Although the coincidence of the two events was apparently accidental, the curriculum council document appeared to meet Mr Graham's criticism head-on.

It called for enterprise education to become a "cross-curricular theme" in the new curriculum and said studies should help pupils to develop skills and understanding beyond purely commercial considerations.

In particular, the document cited the need to encourage children to understand the consequences for the environment and human rights of their economic and financial decisions.

Mr Duncan Graham, chief

executive of the curriculum council, said the new entrepreneurial approach would be spread through existing subjects.

In English pupils could be encouraged to read literature about poverty to understand distribution of wealth, in history they could study the development of trade, while science would provide the forum for considering waste disposal and re-cycling.

Thirty teachers at Sylvan High School, Croydon, south London, which is being converted into a City Technology College, walked out on a two-day strike yesterday in protest at the disruption caused by building work. The strikers are all members of the National Union of Teachers.

Law colleges start night classes as demand soars

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

AN OVERWHELMING demand from students seeking to qualify as solicitors has prompted an unprecedented decision by the five colleges of law in England and Wales to start night classes for several hundred extra students.

The full-time courses, which will create an extra 614 places in September, are being held as a one-off emergency measure to cope with what is amounting almost to a crisis in the mismatch between demand and places.

Mr Richard Holbrook, chairman of the board of the management of The College of Law, said the college was "very concerned about the high level of unmet demand for places on courses leading to the Law Society's final examination".

Throughout the country, taking both the five colleges of law and the eight polytechnics which run the Law Society's vocational course, there are about 4,000 places for students wishing to qualify as solicitors. However, there are

now about 8,000 students seeking places for the courses, from 5pm to 9pm, starting in September.

Mr Holbrook said that there was duplication from the 850 students who went on the Bar's vocational course. Many of those applied for a place on the Law Society course as a fall-back and the places would not be taken up. Others would decide they did not want to train as a lawyer.

"But whatever you say about the figures, one has to acknowledge that there is a very significant shortage of places at the moment. Our whole raison d'être is to provide the education, the profession needs," he added.

It looks a bit hollow if we are not able to service the profession and cannot deliver the goods when there is a crisis."

He added that it had only been possible to launch the courses because of the commitment and enthusiasm of the college staff who had volunteered to run the evening courses.

Mrs Jenny Treleven, a member of the board of management from the Lancaster Gate branch, said she had been "astonished" at the staff response. "This goes way beyond what they are contractually required to do."

The increased demand for places is thought to come largely from non-law graduates. The annual intake of law students to universities and polytechnics throughout the country is 5,300, making almost 3,000 students from other subjects or mixed disciplines.

Mr Holbrook said that the philosophy of the college had been to provide a place for all those wanting one. In the long-term, however, the demand is going to bring about a new policy of selection.

The Law Society has changed the rules so that places will no longer be offered on a "first-come, first-served basis". From September 1991, The College of Law will be able to select the students it wants.

The crisis will be slightly eased by new courses expected to start this autumn at Leicester Polytechnic and the Polytechnic of Wales. The College of Law itself has already created extra places with the opening of its York branch. With the night courses this September it will be offering 762 more places than in 1989-90 and 1,268 more than in 1988-89.

However, it was questionable whether the profession would be able to assimilate all the students wanting to qualify, even if they had places, Mr Holbrook said.

Wolff now latest US grandmaster

By Raymond Keene Chess Correspondent

PATRICK Wolff, the US master aged 22 from Boston, crowned a good result in the Watson Farley and Williams International Chess Tournament in the City of London by clinching his grandmaster title with one round to spare. He drew with Murray Chandler, of England, on Tuesday to secure the vital ½ point, giving him the 8½ required.

He shares the lead in the tournament with Bent Larsen, the Danish grandmaster aged 55. Today's last round will decide who wins the race between the old master and the young hopeful. Wolff plays white against Julian Hodgson, the grandmaster from London, and top placed British player in the competition. Larsen has the black pieces against Paul Motwani, the Scottish master.



Mrs Israel: "Firms need to improve recruitment"

Students 'face race bias by big firms'

By Frances Gibb

LAW students from ethnic minorities who apply to big commercial firms of solicitors suffer more discrimination than any other candidates, the Law Society says today. The society says in a report that black candidates had to apply to a "significantly larger number of firms for each invitation received for interview".

At the interview itself, they were twice as likely to be asked seemingly irrelevant questions about family background; and at the end of the selection process, they were almost twice as likely as white candidates to have received more rejections of offers than articles.

The report finds little evidence of direct or intentional discrimination. Large commercial practices, however, usually operate a policy of seeking "excellence" from candidates - "usually an Oxford or Cambridge degree". Proportionately fewer ethnic minority candidates qualified under such criteria of excellence.

The report, funded jointly by the Law Society and the Commission for Racial Equality, has resulted in talks about selection policies between the Law Society and some large City firms.

Mrs Jennifer Israel, chairwoman of the society's race relations committee, said: "Clearly there is more work to do in persuading and educating firms of solicitors about improving recruitment practices."

The profession, the report says, should overhaul the criteria and selection procedures for article clerks. *Ethnic Minorities and Recruitment to the Solicitors' Profession* (Law Society Shop, 227 The Strand, London WC2; £4.95)



Closely observed flower: Rachel Postlethwaite, aged four, takes a close look at one of our rarest wild flowers, the snake's head fritillary, at the National Nature Reserve at North Meadow, by the Thames at Cricklade. The plant was once commonly found along the Thames Valley

Academic seeks UK's 'black bourgeoisie'

By Craig Seton

A RESEARCH project has begun to assess the growth of what is said to be a new "black elite" of Asian and Afro-Caribbean entrepreneurs who are overcoming racial and commercial barriers to succeed in business.

Professor Ellis Cashmore, who will head the project at the University of Aston, Birmingham, said yesterday that he believed that the emerging black middle class was another side of

the story of deprivation and disadvantage frequently associated with Britain's ethnic minorities.

Professor Cashmore, aged 40, a sociologist at the University of Tampa, Florida, is a visiting fellow at Aston, where researchers from the university's business school have joined his project team.

He wants to interview Asian and Afro-Caribbean entrepreneurs in order to understand the reasons for their success in business. He believes

that the growth of a black British middle class could be similar to the emergence of a "black bourgeoisie" in the United States, where an estimated 20 per cent of blacks have become high-earners, while the majority of their community continue to struggle in relative poverty.

Professor Cashmore said yesterday: "I think there is an emergent black middle class in this country, but it has emerged probably over the last five years. There are now a greater number

of black business owners than ever before, but how solidly they are established is the question."

He said he wanted to discover whether black entrepreneurs had been encouraged by the business climate created by the Thatcher Government or whether they had gone into business on their own as the only alternative to unemployment.

Professor Cashmore added: "I think there has been too much gloom and doom and despair."

Listeria may be made notifiable

By Sheila Gynn Political Reporter

THE Department of Health is considering whether to make listeria a notifiable disease to compel doctors to report suspected cases to the authorities.

In response to demands from the Commons social services committee, the department indicated enthusiasm yesterday for the committee's recommendation to include listeria in the updated list being compiled.

It said that more than 500 letters had been sent to the department over the list with many suggesting adding other diseases, including listeria. The latest figures disclose a small drop in the number of deaths in England and Wales from listeria, including abortions, from 63 in 1988 to 55 last year. But the committee is concerned that some deaths and miscarriages due to the disease may escape diagnosis unless it is made notifiable.

The department will start a study next month to find out women's views about being questioned over their eating habits while pregnant.

Food Poisoning: Listeria and Listeriosis (Government's response to the Commons social services committee's 1st report, Stationery Office: £1.75)

£3 BILLION SAYS YOU COULD EASILY MOVE TO DOCKLANDS.

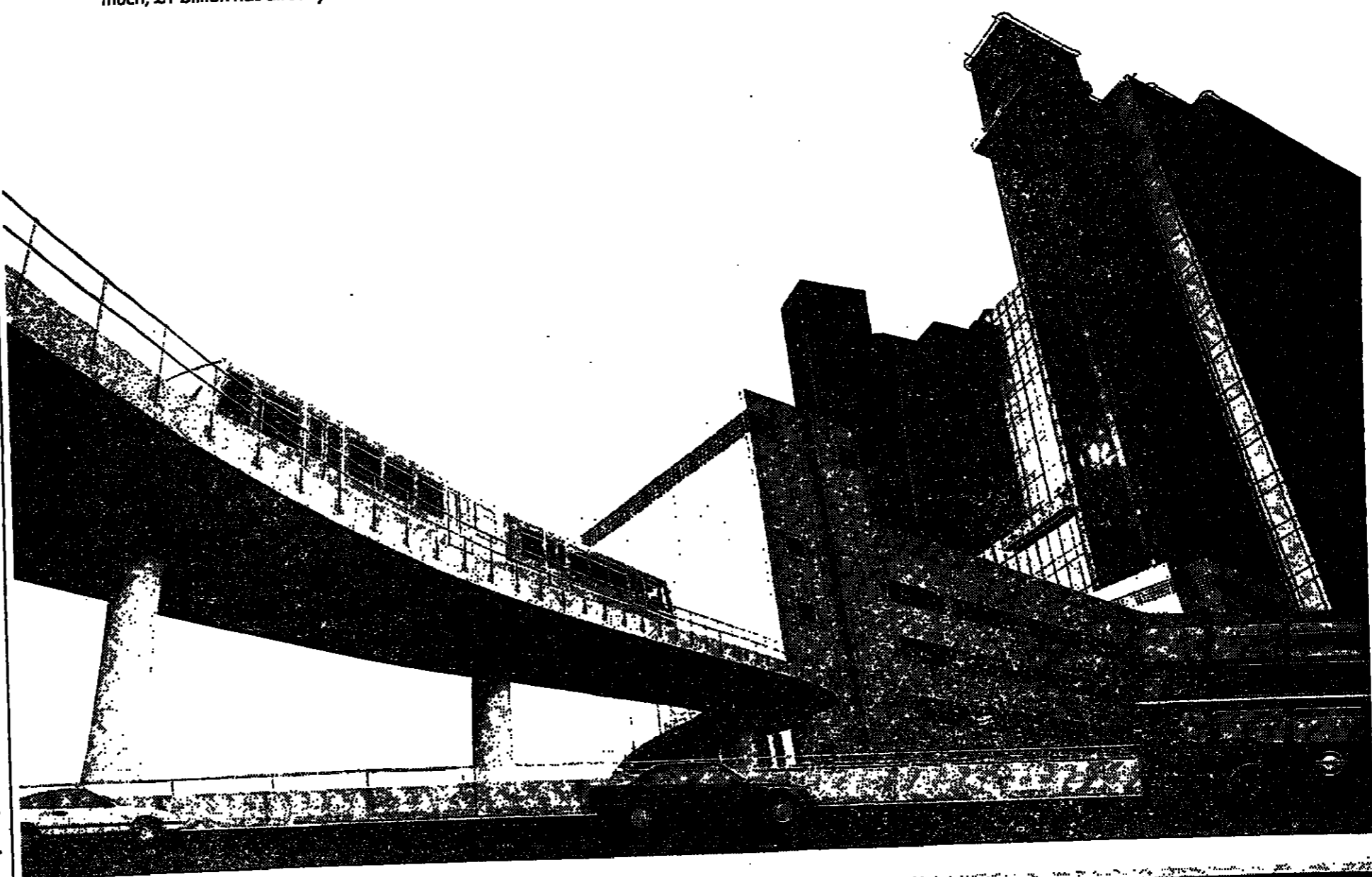
Cast your mind forward just a few years. The world will be a very different place. Britain will be part of a single, integrated European market. And London Docklands will be part of a single, integrated European capital. Now think how well placed that could leave you. No other area in the UK is investing as much; £1 billion has already been committed

to put you just a few minutes from the City. By rail or catamaran. And a short hop from Paris or Brussels via London City Airport. But it doesn't stop there. Over £3 billion is destined for transport to serve London Docklands. There'll be a 9½ mile extension of the Jubilee Line. And a major new road (linked to the City and the motorway network),

some of it underground to protect the environment.

And what an environment it will be. Because all this is only happening in and around London Docklands. Why not find out more right now? Leave it too long and things could easily move on without you.

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Old tyres may provide power for Midlands

By Craig Seton and Nick Nuttall

THE first British power plant capable of incinerating at least half of the 25 million old tyres dumped annually while providing electricity for up to 20,000 homes may be built near Birmingham.

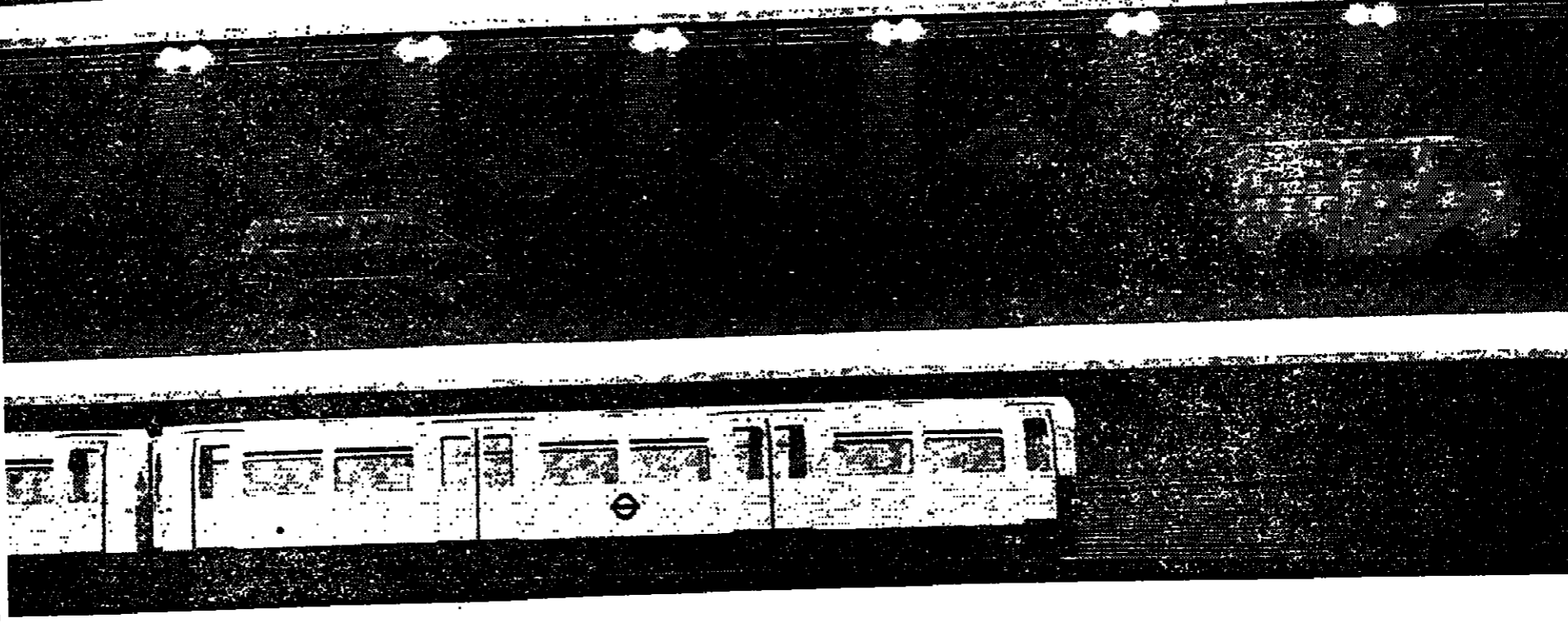
The company behind the scheme, Elm Energy and Recycling, of Hebron, Connecticut, is investigating four potential sites within 15 miles of the city for the £32 million plant, it was disclosed yesterday.

Mrs Anne Evans, Elm's president, said that it had submitted plans to the Department of Energy to try to benefit from government support for alternative energy projects. Elm was confident

that the plant would be environmentally safe and could end the dumping of waste rubber at land-fill sites.

Mrs Evans said that if the plant were approved, it could be running by 1992, with its electricity offered to the privatized Midland Electricity company. The process had been used in the United States. Steel, zinc oxide and gypsum waste were recycled.

Friends of the Earth and poverty groups, including Neighbourhood Energy Action, have made a joint call for investment in more efficient use of energy in low-income households to combat the misery of cold homes and to reduce greenhouse-effect gases.



Patten defends conservancy council division

THE Government's proposal to divide the Nature Conservancy Council into four country-based councils was defended in the Commons last night by Mr Christopher Patten, Secretary of State for the Environment.

Speaking during the report stage of Environmental Protection Bill, he rejected arguments from the Opposition that the overall strategic function, he said, that the proposed joint committee would have the resources it needed.

Mr Bryan Gould, chief opposition spokesman on the environment, moved a new clause calling for the proposed joint committee on countryside functions to undertake research at a national level and to establish common standards relating to

ENVIRONMENT

natural and wildlife conservation.

He said that the Government had exploded a bombshell on the conservation world last year by announcing that the Nature Conservancy Council was to be dissolved and its functions shared out among a number of countryside councils.

Many saw the proposal as having emanated from a deal between the Scottish Office and powerful commercial interests which wanted to pursue their forestry proposals, particularly in the flow country.

There were well founded fears that the consequences would mean a body blow to the whole conservation movement. The suspicions and fears remained unallayed.

Labour had sought to align itself with the overwhelming concern of the conservation movement that a gap would be left after the dismemberment.

There was a need to preserve the science base, to provide a UK dimension to advice tendered to the Government, common standards throughout the UK, and a need for UK representation on international bodies.

The voluntary conservation movement remained unshaken and took the view that this part of the Bill should be abandoned.

Sir William Wilkinson, chairman of the conservancy council, had written to MPs that a new set of conservation bodies answering to different government departments might not be able properly to retain "a sufficient Great Britain overview of science and policy issues in Britain so essential to the conservation of our natural heritage".

He had written that many of the concerns about the Bill as it affected the council remained unresolved, especially over questions of resources, clarity of legislation and the work of the proposed joint committee.

Nothing they had heard so far led them to conclude that the Government had resolved how to meet a degree of devolution but preserve a proper Great Britain dimension on the science base and the setting of standards.

To carry out this dismemberment was going to be very expensive. The best estimate from the council was that the reorganization would add £20 million to its present budget.

"No one on the Labour side of the House has ever argued against the devolutionary interests."

"What is at issue is whether in the course of providing that greater degree of devolution, it is necessary to dismantle, dismember, dissolve, destroy the

council which operates on a Great Britain basis."

Mr Patten said that the Opposition was in a mess on the issue. The joint committee would be able to obtain the data and information it needed directly from the country councils.

A small secretarial and technical unit would be required. The House of Lords select committee, chaired by Lord Carver, had recommended up to 20 professional staff and the Government was sympathetic.

Lord Carver had made clear, however, that the joint committee should not be an independent quango, but derive its funds through the country councils. The ability to employ staff directly was one of the hallmarks of full quango status and the Government would not be doing that.

The Government's proposals had certainly aroused strong emotions. No one had been able to convince him that it was inherently wrong to have separate public sector agencies for nature conservation in each country, provided that there were satisfactory arrangements to deal with the wider dimensions of wildlife - as was being provided with the joint committee under Professor Frederick Holliday.

A new beginning was needed and that was what the Bill would achieve. The credentials of the new agencies could not be doubted seriously in view of the appointments of the chairmen-designate, Professor Holliday, Lord Cranbrook, Mr Magnus Magnusson and Mr Michael Griffith. Each had links with the voluntary movement.

Mr Andrew Bennett (Denton and Radcliffe, Lab) had some sympathy with the new Secretary of State who was being called upon to perform Houdini feats on both the poll tax and on this Bill. On the Nature Conservancy Council, the minister was looking forward to the day when the Government had done so little work to flesh out its proposals.

The Government was getting rid of the council only because it had brought awkward advice to ministers. Ministers had turned on the message.

Sir Hector Mearns (Dumfries, C) said that he was the longest-serving member of the council, and Sir William Wilkinson, chairman of the council, had been acting in his personal capacity when writing to MPs. Most members of the council were in favour of the proposals and the Scottish members had been unanimously in favour of them.

"Of course the staff have been very concerned from the beginning as staff would be when they realize that there may be re-allocations of jobs, although the minister from the start was able to say that their jobs were assured."

Rifkind promises benefit for Scots

RAILWAYS

MINISTERS are determined that the north of England and Scotland will benefit from the building of the Channel tunnel.

Mr Malcolm Rifkind, Secretary of State for Scotland, said during Commons question time.

Mr Gavin Strang (Edinburgh East, Lab) said that electrification of lines between Edinburgh and Glasgow was needed to provide the most modern type of service and a decision was becoming urgent because the present electrification programme at Carstairs would end this year.

The Government should ensure that there was a start on electrification between the two cities and between Edinburgh and Dundee before the electrification programme at Carstairs would end this year.

Mr Rifkind said that electrification was essentially a matter for British Rail and the rail authorities were in the best position to judge whether investment should be in express units or electrification.

Mr Alick Buchanan-Smith (Kincardine and Deeside, C) said that the British Rail decision to end a sleeper service from Aberdeen to London without proper consultation made some MPs worried about British Rail's commitment to the east coast line, particularly when it showed itself reluctant to consider the serious importance of electrification.

Mr Rifkind said that he was concerned about what Mr Bu-

chan-Smith said. He understood that British Rail was proposing to combine two overnight trains, putting sitting passengers and sleepers together on the same train (laughter).

Mr Brian Wilson, an Opposition spokesman on Scottish affairs, said that they understood from ScotRail that they were prepared to reconsider electrification of the Edinburgh to Glasgow line.

He asked: "Will the Scottish Office, for once, enter into some constructive spirit on rail services and electrification, and Mr Rifkind use whatever diminished influence he has to get rid of the absurd 8 per cent per annum return on investment criterion?"

"What is the Scottish Office doing about the Channel tunnel and the now imminent prospect of Scotland being further isolated and disadvantaged because electrification and top-level high-speed rail services will not extend into Scotland. Is there any strategy on the tunnel in the Scottish Office?"

Mr Rifkind: I share his enthusiasm for rail travel, and I agree about the importance of ensuring that British Rail carries out the necessary investment so that Scotland can have the full benefit of the tunnel.

Peers will be asked to be more open on interests

By Sheila Gunn, Political Reporter

PEERS are to be asked to declare their financial interests more often and more fully before speaking on related subjects in the Lords.

But the Lords procedure committee has decided not to recommend to the House that a register of interests should be set up on the lines of the Commons registers for MPs, their staff and journalists.

Lord Aberdeen, chairman of committees, will present the report to the House within the next few weeks and ask for the peers' approval.

Lords sources disclosed yesterday that the committee's investigation concluded that, although most peers declare a general interest when speaking in debates, the system is open to abuse.

The committee agrees that the Lords is a House of experts, but its key concern is the increase in the number of peers reading out briefings on behalf of organizations or lobbyists and tabling amendments to Bills on their behalf without stating their links to the organizations.

The peers' "bible", the *Companion to the Standing Orders*, says: "Lords speak always on their personal honour. It follows that if a lord decides that it is proper for him to take part in a

debate on a subject in which he has a direct pecuniary interest, he should declare it. It is, however, considered undesirable for a lord to advocate, promote or oppose in the House any Bill or subordinate legislation in or for which he is or has been acting or concerned for any pecuniary fee or reward."

As there is no Speaker in the Lords, it is left to other peers to object if they believe a member has not declared a pecuniary interest. But in practice that does not happen. The report will call for those rules to be tightened to require peers to state their specific interest and to do so whenever they speak on a related subject.

One occasion in recent years which would have been affected by such a requirement was the introduction of a Bill to change the drug patent laws by Lord Northfield who declared that he was an adviser to the pharmaceutical industry. He did not, however, declare in the House that he was a paid consultant to the American drug company Merck, Sharp and Dohme.

Many other peers are known to have accepted briefs from organizations either paid or voluntary, and then argued for changes in legislation without always declaring their interests.



'Fiddler on the Roof'

MR MALCOLM Rifkind, Secretary of State for Scotland, was dubbed a "latter-day King Canute" during Commons questions over his insistence that the poll tax was here to stay.

He retorted that his shadow, Mr Donald Dewar, was a "Fiddler on the Roof" because of his failure to spell out details of Labour's proposed roof tax.

During rowdy exchanges, Mr Dewar asked the Secretary of State to confirm that there would be relief for Scottish poll tax payers by this summer.

In view of the admission made by the Prime Minister of fatal flaws in the poll tax, did he hold to his statement last month that the tax worked and was here to stay?

Mr Rifkind said that the community charge was here to stay. Improvements, if there were any, would be made, would apply throughout the United Kingdom.

He was not surprised that 30 per cent to 40 per cent of people would like to see the rates back. That was exactly the proportion who did not pay a penny under the old system.

He had accused Labour earlier of being coy

about the cost of its proposed roof tax. "If he wishes to describe me as a latter-day King Canute, I have to describe him as a latter-day Fiddler on the Roof" (laughter).

Earlier, Mr Alexander Salmond (Banff and Buchan, SNP) described himself as a non-payer of the tax and proud to be part of the campaign which would sink it. Would the coming changes to the legislation be backdated to cover the full year in which Scots had had to face the full bill?

Mr Nicholas Bennett (Pembroke, C) said that there was something fundamentally undemocratic about what he called free-loading scroungers, elected to the House of Commons, seeking to change a law which they did not obey.

He withdrew the word "scroungers" at the request of the Speaker (Mr Bernard Weatherill), replacing it with "those people who do not pay their dues to society and expect other people to pay it for them."

Mr Rifkind said that there was something disreputable about such "free-loading MPs" who imposed an even heavier burden on the rest of the community.

Guns for Iraq debate refused by Speaker

A DEMAND from a Conservative backbencher for an emergency debate on the "guns for Iraq" case was rejected by the Speaker in the Commons because it did not fall within the appropriate standing order.

Sir John Stiles (Halesowen and Stourbridge, C) complained of the action of the Customs and Excise against employees of Walter Somers over the export of the steel pipes. He said that three senior managers and seven employees had been interviewed. He had now seen reports that three people had been arrested, but not, as he understood it, charged. The actions had caused grave disquiet to employees and their families and there was great anxiety in the firm and in Halesowen generally.

Action of this kind by a Government department was unusual, to say the least, when the Government knew, all

ARRESTS

along, what was happening. "I hope that honourable and patriotic men are not going to be pilloried to save the Government's face."

Mr David Winnick (Walsall North, Lab) said that there was widespread concern in the West Midlands over what was happening and the way in which people in Halesowen were being treated. West Midlands MPs had asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Mr Nicholas Ridley) for the dates on which Sir Hal Miller, Conservative MP for Bromsgrove, had raised the question of the Iraq export order for pipes, but they had not been told.

The Speaker (Mr Bernard Weatherill) said the replies were a matter for the discretion of ministers.

Decision soon on sculpture

THREE GRACES

THE proposed export of the Canova sculpture "The Three Graces" is still being considered by Mr Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, the House of Lords was told by Lord Hesketh.

Under Secretary of State for the Environment. He said the minister hoped to make an announcement soon.

Concern about the export proposal for the sculpture was expressed by Lord St John of Fawley (C), a former arts minister, who said that many in the art world would accept the intervention of private funding for works of art if there were to be access to the public in perpetuity and a permanent export ban.

"But, in the absence of such guarantees, what possible grounds could the Government have for intervening, and distinguishing between one private owner and another?"

Lord Hesketh said that the offer made by the Barclay brothers for the sculpture had nothing to do with the Government but was an offer made to the owners.

Lady Birk, the Opposition

spokesman in the Lords on the arts, said that the offer made by Mr Jacob Rothschild for the sculpture should be considered by ministers.

Lord Hesketh said that the Government's role, as in other cases, was that of deciding on an export licence.

Mr Ridley had proposed an extension of the criteria to provide protection after uncertainty and unhappiness in the art world about the future of the sculpture.

The government indemnity scheme enables institutions to borrow the cream of privately owned works of art, Mr Richard Lacey, Minister for the Arts, said in a Commons written reply.

He was replying to Mr Timothy Wood (Sleevange, C), who asked what steps he was taking to encourage public access to important works of art held privately.

Mr Lacey said that the scheme encouraged public access to privately owned works of art by removing the cost of insurance.

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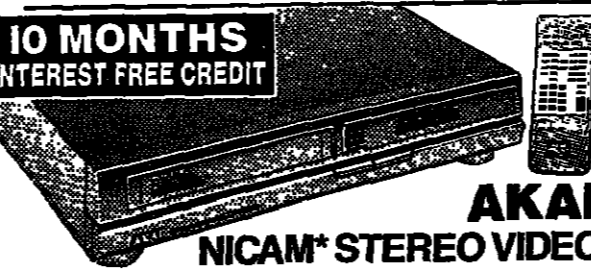
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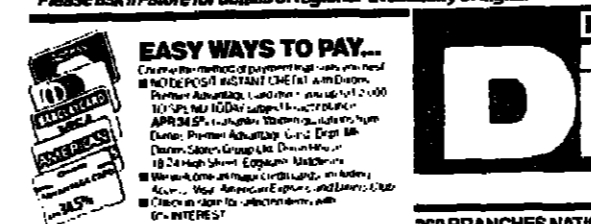
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Gorbachov humiliation never happened — official

From Mary Dejevsky
Moscow

THE Soviet government newspaper, *Izvestia*, was alone among Soviet media yesterday to report the 40,000-strong demonstration against President Gorbachov at Monday's May Day rally in Moscow, and his premature departure from the reviewing stand. According to Soviet television and the rest of the press, the humiliation never happened.

What took place instead, according to Tass, was a small demonstration by immature and occasionally irresponsible political groups, who shouted provocative slogans and tried to use the occasion — unsuccessfully — for their own ends.

Tass reported: "When the trade-union sponsored demonstration was over... columns from the city's different regions, organized by the Moscow City Council and the League of Voters, entered the

square one by one. The ranks of the demonstrators included representatives of a broad spectrum of organizations and movements which — although they are still called "informals" — have become a reality of our political life. Pluralism was reflected in the slogans, and we have to say frankly that we would have found it hard to imagine some of those banners flying over Red Square until recently.

"We should also note that the number of demonstrators was considerably fewer than had been expected and the impression created by the procession was at times hard to take: individual slogans were openly provocative, hooliganistic and extremist. They called not for consolidation but for direct confrontation with the constitutional authorities."

This Tass account, in one form or other, has now become the authorized version of Tuesday's events. Every national Soviet

paper, bar one, reprinted it, either by itself and attributed to Tass, or in the course of a round-up of the Moscow May Day by their own correspondents — "with Tass". In these composite reports, when the time came to report the second Red Square demonstration, the wording was pure Tass. It also provided the commentary to the truncated television film of the demonstration.

The official Communist Party paper, *Pravda*, chose to add a little didacticism of its own, writing that the behaviour of the demonstrators made "appeals for international solidarity and cohesion against anarchy and violence, and for joint action to establish civil peace, sound all the more urgent and convincing."

However, *Izvestia* published on its front page a long and rather different account, which said unambiguously that the official party had been "compelled" to leave Red Square. After describing the

arrangements for the demonstration, enumerating the mustering points and the fully voluntary basis of participation, it said: "The organizers had made known to the official authorities that there would be no censorship of the banners carried by the demonstrators. The only demand was that they should not be anti-constitutional. But when the columns entered Red Square with slogans that were plainly insulting, it was clear that the 'infancy' of our democracy had, alas, played its usual bad joke on Muscovites. It is unlikely that the authorities of any capital city in any civilized country would have permitted such a demonstration. Here, they allowed it, relying on the political wisdom of the organizers."

"But for some reason, some informal groups thought when they entered Red Square that, by running down the Government and hurling outright insults at the President, they would not only be

able to show their courage but also accelerate changes in the country." *Izvestia* commented: "We cannot exclude the possibility that they might achieve some sort of 'acceleration': the only question is — which direction would the changes take." Expressing concern that some of the slogans were "calls for direct confrontation with the constitutional authorities", the report went on: "In these circumstances, the people on the stand — who included the newly elected Mayor of Moscow, Mr Gavril Popov — were compelled to leave Red Square, and the last columns of informal groups held their demonstration only for the benefit of each other."

After delivering a homily about the demonstrators' lack of a mandate for their actions, the paper concluded that although the noisy contributions from the crowd would "hardly affect the political situation in the country, they did, none the less, spoil the

holiday". The editorial staff of *Izvestia*, in common with those of most other Soviet newspapers, were on holiday yesterday and no official explanation could be obtained.

But three factors may have played a part. Although often not distributed until the morning, *Izvestia* is an evening paper and would have had to decide its editorial line before the, now definitive, Tass report was available. Second, it is at present without an editor-in-chief — the previous editor, Igor Laptev, was recently appointed chairman of the Supreme Soviet's Chamber of the Union and a new editor has not been named. A temporary or junior editor might have taken the decision. Third, the paper is the organ of the Soviet Government, not of the party, and its coverage of Soviet politics has tended to favour the radical reformists. Being responsible to the Government rather than the party, it

might incline towards the Prime Minister rather than the party leadership in a conflict.

● **RIGA:** After a stormy debate, the caucus of deputies of the Latvian Popular Front agreed yesterday on a declaration of Latvian sovereignty to be put to the republic's supreme soviet, today (Anatoli Lieven writes). The motion provides for a "transition period" to real independence, following the Estonian rather than Lithuanian pattern.

The final draft declares illegal the Soviet annexation of Latvia, and restores in principle the validity of the 1922 constitution of the independent republic. But only four of the proposed constitutional clauses are actually to be brought into effect: those declaring Latvia an independent democratic republic; that all sovereign power belongs to the Latvian people; Latvian sovereignty over the whole territory of Latvia, and provision for elections.

Moscow protests may slow reform and spark revenge

From Mary Dejevsky, Moscow

"Mark my words, they will take their revenge," said Mr Telman Gdlyan, Moscow's folk hero and sacked investigator, of the likely Politburo reaction to the May Day demonstration in Moscow.

The Soviet press also warned that the anti-regime protest might have the opposite effect to that desired, implying that the movement towards greater democracy and economic reform might be reversed.

Spokesmen for two of the informal groups which took part, the Constitutional Democrats (Kadets) and the Social Democratic Association, said that their members had not suffered any adverse consequences as a result. Extra surveillance, harassment, raids on offices, summary detention on petty charges, are all possibilities that may await some of the protesters.

There were many plainclothes police and KGB in the crowd. Some noted placard wording, or filmed protesters.

A day after the demonstrations — a day on which most Muscovites were on holiday — it is still too early to foresee the consequences, but a few markers can be established. President Gorbachov is caught in the same pincer-grip of the radicals and the conservatives — but perhaps even more tightly than before. The double demonstration showed

that all too clearly: the first, organized by the official trade unions, was in its way as anti-regime as the second anti-communist one. Trade union official after trade union official called for strict price controls and the maintenance of workers' "living standards"; they expressed weariness of a market economy and said that reform should not be pursued at any cost. These were some of the concerns Mr Gorbachov had heard earlier in the Urals.

The reformers' demonstration was directed first against Communist Party rule and second against its personification, President Gorbachov. Where an alternative leader was mentioned, it was Mr Boris Yeltsin, the radical reformist — but his support derives less from his views on economic reform than his oratory and his opposition to the communist establishment.

The sentiments expressed on May Day leave the political balance roughly where it was. But the freedom with which anti-regime demonstrators waved banners and derided the leadership is bound to strengthen the conservatives, if only temporarily.

Their cause is law and order and due respect for authority — and this is a popular cause, as the election of so many military men and police at the recent local elections showed.

Their representatives in the leadership can be imagined asking Mr Gorbachov how long he is prepared to tolerate such disorder as, in their view, was seen in Red Square, and whether he does not consider what happened to be a humiliation. In this respect, President Gorbachov's position has been weakened.

The reformers can reply that the second Red Square demonstration was a well-used opportunity for the disgruntled masses to let off steam. It is to the advantage of the Moscow organizers that there was no violence, and they will be able to pass the whole episode off as an over-exuberant manifestation of democracy. But the "freedom and democracy" ticket does not help Mr Gorbachov at home any longer. The radicals are way ahead of him.

The continuing problem for Mr Gorbachov's opponents in the leadership is to find an alternative leader who could keep the radicals and the conservatives moving in the same direction of reform.

To judge by some of Mr Gorbachov's recent statements, he feels that unless a degree of political consensus can be maintained at the centre, there is a risk of confrontation.

Tuesday's demonstrations may have assisted Mr Nikolai Ryzhkov, the Prime Minister. The go-slow reformers used to be Mr Yegor Ligachov's constituency, but their misgivings are increasingly being voiced by Mr Ryzhkov.

The wrath of the Kremlin's conservatives may be partially assuaged by the planned military parade through Red Square next week to mark Victory Day.

As well as boosting the morale of a jaded military, it will also give the Army an opportunity to show that it wields a measure of power.

Mr Gorbachov could also minimize the damage to his own position in the leadership by taking action against the Moscow Communist Party and city council, which helped to organize the demonstration. Again, however, he faces problems. The new council is trying to work within the system. Any heavy-handed action by the Kremlin would hasten the likely confrontation and alienate much of Moscow.

The May Day balance sheet leaves Mr Gorbachov weakened, the open divisions between radicals and conservatives widened, but no one individual strengthened sufficiently to challenge for power. Had there been civil disorder the Army might have sent its tanks to Red Square eight days before Victory Day. As it is, Victory Day should be a celebration and a warning, but not punishment.

The difference in negotiating tactics may have as much impact upon this summer of European peace negotiations as the substance of the issues



Shadow of violence: A stone-throwing youth silhouetted against a blazing car as hundreds of young left-wingers wrecked shops, set fires and fought riot police in Kreuzberg, West Berlin, after May Day rallies degenerated into running battles

US seeks unity formula to allay Kremlin fears

From Peter Stothard, US Editor, Washington

When Mr James Baker, the US Secretary of State, sits down this weekend for the "two plus four" talks he will carry a file of "step-by-step approaches" to persuade the Soviet Union to accept a united Germany within Nato. When Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, his Soviet counterpart, attends the same meeting it is thought that he will have a similar file of ideas, but one reading "All or Nothing".

The difference in negotiating tactics may have as much impact upon this summer of European peace negotiations as the substance of the issues

themselves. The US sees no alternative to a unified Germany within Nato. It perceives that outcome as in the interests of the Germans, other Nato members, Germany's eastern neighbours and the Soviet Union. The questions are how to get there, how long the journey will take and, increasingly as time goes by, how much it will cost.

At the Ottawa meeting in February, the Soviet Union appeared briefly to be joining the US path of incremental steps to a new European security system. Since then the Soviet negotiators have alarmed some Americans by appearing to move into reverse, stalling the conventional arms-reduction process and cavilling over details thought to have been agreed.

But today the US has adapted to what its officials prefer to call a "synchronized" rather than an "all-or-nothing" approach by the other side. The US is prepared to

push Germany into what it sees as the right package of incentives which can be tied up with a ribbon for the benefit of Mr Gorbachov's people back home.

The first part of the deal probably has to be a big reduction in the German Army, to be negotiated through the conventional forces process in Vienna. Both sides would want some period of phasing in the changes.

The Soviet Union may have given up the idea of a neutral Germany. Moscow does not want to risk a neutral Germany becoming an independently nuclear-armed Germany, but will still want a big reduction in Nato nuclear arms on German soil.

The US will insist, however, both to the Soviet Union and to the Germans, that continuing membership of Nato must mean the siting of nuclear-armed aircraft in Germany. The chosen weapon, the Tactical Air-to-Surface Missile, which can be fitted on most combat aircraft, will become a key part of discussions.

One of the easier parts of the deal will be the securing of a German commitment on renouncing its own nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. Another will be a formal German endorsement of its present Polish border. But mere German promises will not be enough. Thus, the stage is set for the hardest part of the package — the new security structure itself and the transitional arrangements to it.



Mr Baker: Step-by-step approach to reunification

Leading article, page 13

East Berlin bows to Kohl on currency

From Anne McElvoy, East Berlin

THE East German Government relented yesterday in its campaign to secure more favourable terms in the July currency union with West Germany and agreed to Herr Helmut Kohl, the West German Chancellor.

The decision enables a formal treaty to be signed on monetary and economic union, the first concrete step towards reunification. The decision was announced simultaneously in Bonn and East Berlin and the provisional rate of three Ostmarks for one Deutschmark at currency-exchange booths was immediately reduced to two-for-one in an attempt to limit speculation.

Herr Günter Krause, the head of the East German delegation, charged with agreeing the terms of a treaty, said it was time East Germans considered the attitude of the West German population towards the effects of monetary union. "This is not just a question of money, but of the future of Germany and we must take into account the fears of the West German population as well as our own expectations," he said.

The statement was a clear response to pressure from Bonn to bring the protracted negotiations on currency union to an end, so as to rescue the dwindling goodwill in the West towards East Germany.

The amount of savings that East Germans can change into Deutschmarks at parity remains at 4,000 marks (£1,454), and after that ceiling, the exchange rate will be halved.

Pensioners, the most likely group to suffer in the economic changes ahead, will be allowed to change 6,000 marks at parity. The amount proposed for children has been reduced to half the adult rate after widespread opposition in West Germany. Herr Krause said the agreement was considered final but admitted that many East Germans, particularly those with young families, would be disappointed at the failure of their negotiators to secure a deal on compensation for price rises which will follow currency union because of the removal of subsidies on basic foods and services.

The East German Govern-

ment is now placing the population with the promise of "dynamic development" in the economy leading to a swift rise in wages.

● **BONN:** The currency treaty agreed yesterday comes four days before the East German local elections (Ian Murray writes). The deal represents a compromise which will not cost Bonn extra money thus avoiding endangering the strength of the Deutscher Mark.

The treaty's 12 points are designed to meet the expectations raised by Herr Kohl during East Germany's general election campaign in March, which enabled the Christian Democrats (CDU) there to win the largest share of the vote.

The CDU-led East German Government, which has been apprehensive about hanging on to the share of the vote it achieved in March, accepted the compromise so that it would have concrete evidence to show the electors on Sunday that the process of reunification was under way.

The Bonn Government had made it plain from the outset of the two days of intensive negotiations that it could make no further concessions that would cost money. In offering to exchange wages and pensions at parity along with savings up to 4,000 Ostmarks it said it had reached the limits of economic common sense.

The importance of the treaty to East German electors is underlined by a poll taken last week, by the Wickert Institute, among 1,420 people after Bonn made its offer of exchange at parity. This showed that 69 per cent now feel that they are better off economically compared with just 36 per cent the previous week. Only 13 per cent, compared with 27 per cent, said that they were going to be worse off through currency union and the numbers who felt nothing would change had fallen from 21 per cent to 10 per cent. Even the number of "don't knows" had been halved from 16 per cent two weeks ago.

In announcing the agreement, Herr Rudolf Seiters, the Chancellor's Minister, said that there was a joint responsibility to see the rapid introduction of a social market economy in East Germany, to maintain currency stability.

German leader reassures Poles

From Roger Boyes, Warsaw

PRESIDENT von Weizsäcker of West Germany came to Warsaw yesterday determined not only to end the long enmity between Germans and Poles but also to repair the more recent damage caused by Herr Helmut Kohl's studied ambiguity over the eastern borders of a new united Germany.

"In substance," he told President Jaruzelski in a reference to the Chancellor's stance, "the question of borders between us is irrevocably settled."

A draft treaty has already been submitted by Poland to the two German states, and the political directors of the West German, East German and Polish foreign ministries will meet in Warsaw today to work on the text.

"Borders should become bridges," President Weizsäcker said. "We do not want to tear down the Berlin Wall in order to re-erect it on the Oder and the Neisse. And we ask you, too, to promote the idea of open borders."

The practice is slightly different. East German border guards, apparently encouraged by Bonn, were tightening controls yesterday on the Polish-German frontier. Since the Oder-Neisse line will soon be

the eastern frontier of the European Community, visa checks are becoming rigorous. But President von Weizsäcker is on an altogether more spiritual mission. His last trip to Poland was on the back of a tank in September, 1939 as part of the German invasion force. But, as President Jaruzelski said last night, he, too, had first experienced Germany as a soldier; it was a generational question.

During his banquet speech last night, General Jaruzelski stated Poland's anxieties about the future with military bluntness. "Germany is becoming again one of the largest powers. That stirs up resentments. Disturbing facts keep these fears alive. And the logical question is raised: How will the future united German state use its huge potential?"

The German President conceded that there was considerable anxiety in Poland: "Some Poles fear a new German drive towards the East and they are frightened of being bought up," he said.

President Jaruzelski used his sharpest tones, in an otherwise conciliatory speech, to demand compensation for the Poles who were used as slave labourers in Hitler's Germany.

Vilnius appeal to Paris and Bonn

Moscow

President Landsbergis of Lithuania appealed yesterday to the leaders of France and West Germany to help persuade the Soviet Union to start talks with the breakaway Baltic republic on its moves to independence.

In a message read to the Lithuanian parliament, President Landsbergis also expressed his willingness to freeze "some of the effects" of laws bolstering the republic's declaration of independence of March 11. But he said that the declaration itself was sacred.

His letters were in response to a joint message last Thursday from President Mitterrand of France and Herr Helmut Kohl, the West German Chancellor, urging patience and caution on Lithuania in its moves for independence from rule by the Kremlin.

An official at the Lithuanian parliamentary information office said: "The main point is to ask them to convey to the Soviet Government that we really want to sit down at the negotiating table. We might be willing to freeze some of the effects of our resolutions." But she said the

letter explicitly stated that "all questions are negotiable except for the March 11 declaration itself."

Mrs Kazimiera Prunskiene, the Lithuanian Prime Minister who is currently visiting North America, said in Toronto that she would try to enlist the help of President Bush when they meet today. She said that she would ask Mr Bush to try to persuade President Gorbachov when the two superpower leaders meet at this month's summit in Washington to break the economic blockade imposed against Lithuania and recognize its declaration of independence. (Reuters)

● **WASHINGTON:** The US Senate has passed by 73 votes to 24 a resolution urging President Bush not to ask Congress to approve any new US-Soviet trade agreements until Moscow lifts its economic sanctions against Vilnius (Martin Fletcher writes).

The resolution was tabled by right-wing Republicans, upset by Mr Bush's failure to take any action when Moscow imposed the sanctions, who want to take a tougher line.

Bernard Levin, page 12

Letters, page 13

Hungarian parties reach deal

From Ernest Beck
Budapest

HUNGARY'S two main political parties yesterday put aside their differences during the inaugural session of the country's first freely elected Parliament in 40 years and agreed to co-operate to ensure the smooth passage of legislation. In terms of the agreement between the centre-right Democratic Forum, the largest party, and the Alliance of Free Democrats, the main opposition group, Mr Arpad Goncz, a writer and founding member of the Free Democrats, will become both Speaker and acting President.

In exchange, the Free Democrats are to agree to waive an article of the Constitution requiring a two-thirds majority for the passage of crucial Bills, including those on ownership and land reform, which could have frustrated the Forum-led coalition's attempts to reshape economic policies.

Both parties emphasized that the agreement did not involve the formation

of a "grand coalition", insisting it was no more than tacit acknowledgement that Hungary needs a government that can act swiftly to tackle pressing economic problems. Dr Jozsef Antall, the Forum's president and the likely Prime Minister, said: "Both parties recognize that co-operation is needed because the country is on the threshold of a severe crisis."

Mr Goncz, who spent six years in prison after the 1956 uprising, is expected to play a unifying role by "rising above petty party interests", as one MP described it. It is assumed that he will eventually become President when Parliament elects one before the July summer break.

The memory of Hungary's brief spell of freedom in 1956 and the scars caused by the brutal crushing of the uprising by Soviet tanks haunted the opening session of Parliament. The first business was to approve an unequivocal legal declaration that 1956 was a "revolutionary freedom fight" and not a "counter-revolution launched by agents of West-

ern imperialism" as the former communist Government claimed. The declaration, which also establishes October 23, the day the revolution began, as a national holiday, said that 1956 "gave us hope to establish a new social order, and now we see that all these sacrifices were not in vain".

There was a mood of buoyant optimism and elation as the new MPs, many of them former dissidents who for decades had been hounded and harassed by the communist regime, took their seats chamber and sang an emotional rendition of the national anthem.

From the youngest MP, a psychology student, aged 23, to the oldest, a former political prisoner, aged 89, the feeling was one of pride that power had been returned to the people and that the communists had finally been sent packing. Instead of the previous rubber-stamp legislature, which met on only eight days a year, the new Parliament will be a professional body of paid representatives continuously in session.



Mr Baker: Step-by-step approach to reunification

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Optimism as De Klerk and Mandela start talks

From Gavin Bell, Cape Town

THE South African Government and the African National Congress have begun their first formal discussions hopeful of reaching agreement on their respective terms for peace.

A mood of cautious optimism prevailed yesterday when the two sides gathered at a closely-guarded Cape Dutch Groote Schuur mansion for three days of talks aimed at removing obstacles to broader negotiations on dismantling apartheid.

Speaking in the grounds of the former white prime minister's residence, President de Klerk said the vast majority of South Africans supported the reform process.

"They are opposed to violence, to conflict, to intimidation, and are reaching for peaceful and just solutions. It is incumbent upon all leaders in South Africa to bring to fulfilment these reasonable aspirations of all our people. The talks which begin this afternoon could make an important contribution to this end," he said.

The Government was approaching the meetings with the utmost earnestness, and

resolve to create a climate for negotiations to begin in earnest, he said.

Mr Nelson Mandela, the ANC's deputy president, said it was a sobering fact that the two sides were meeting seriously for the first time in 78 years. "It indicates the deadly weight of the terrible tradition of a dialogue between master and servant which we have to overcome."

He trusted that all South Africans, regardless of their political affiliations, would participate in the negotiation process without seeking undue advantage.

Both leaders addressed each other's constituencies with assurances that they were aiming for an equitable settlement.

Reaffirming the Government's commitment to universal suffrage, Mr de Klerk welcomed ANC pledges to try to find common ground and eliminate racial tensions. "Despite expected difficulties, there is careful optimism, as well as the faith and conviction that our problems will be solved through negotiation."

"The Government has accepted the challenge to throw everything into the struggle to achieve this. Our eventual goal is a new democratic dispensation for South Africa and all its people. Our prayer is that God will guide us," the President said.

Mr Mandela switched to Afrikaans, which he learned in prison, to reassure whites that they had nothing to fear from the ANC. The multi-racial composition of his delegation was proof of its desire to embrace all citizens in a post-apartheid society, he said.

"All those who are hostages of the past must transform themselves. We must deny the past its attempt to enslave us. The vocabulary of the old society should find no place in our dictionary."

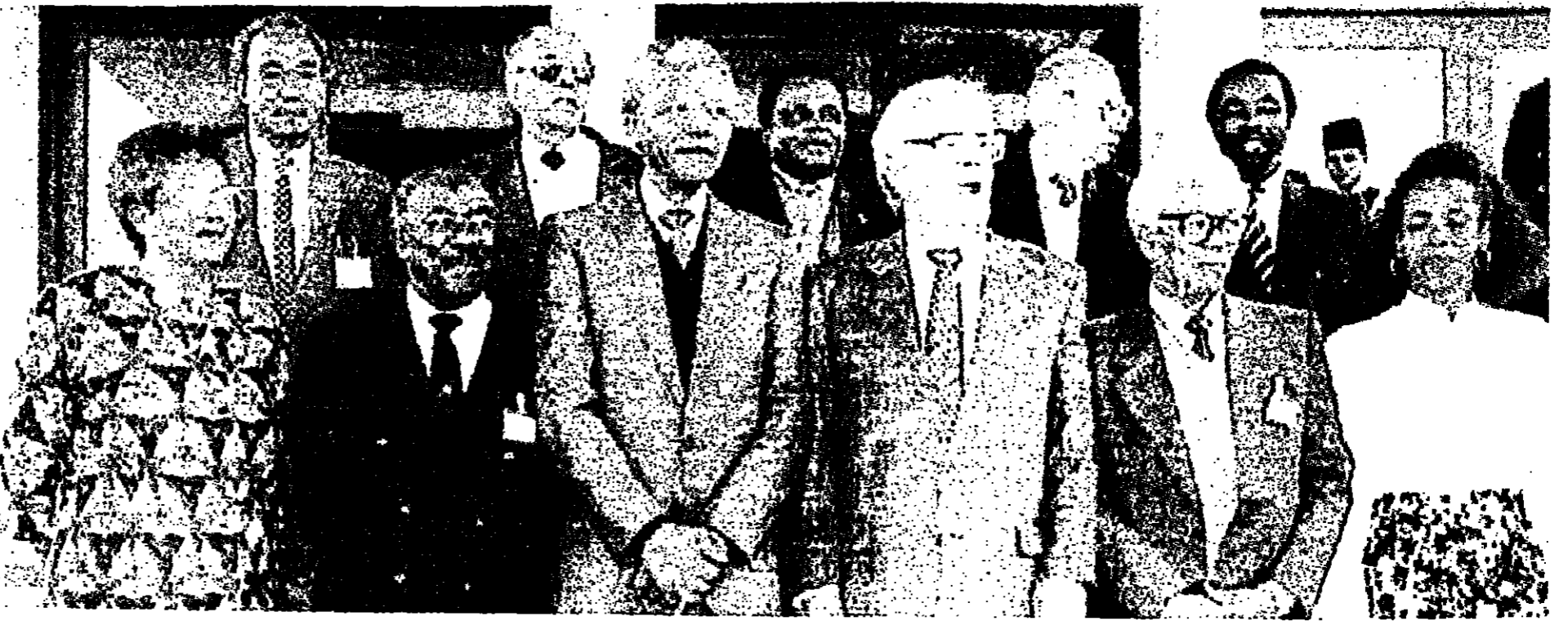
The first round of discussions is confined to perceived obstacles to a wider forum of negotiations on constitutional reforms. The ANC's principal demands are for the state of emergency to be lifted and related security laws to be repealed, the release of all political prisoners, and an end to political trials. As *quid pro quo*, Pretoria is seeking an unequivocal commitment to peace by the ANC, and specifically an end to its "armed struggle".

None of the issues is regarded as insoluble, and the main problem seems to be to compromise on a timetable. The essential divergence is on timing, with the Government insisting on an early commitment to peace and the ANC refusing to do so until its conditions have been met.

However, ANC sources said they could offer a statement of intent to suspend military operations if Pretoria made acceptable concessions on their demands, and suggest further meetings to discuss a mutual suspension of hostilities.

Mr Joe Modise, the commander of the ANC armed wing, outlined the strategy on the eve of the talks: "We are ready to say to the Government that once our conditions have been met, we will be ready to discuss suspending the armed struggle, which amounts to a ceasefire. That is the next stage. It can then say the onus is on us to deliver, and I can assure you we are ready to deliver."

Dr Beyers Naude, a white Afrikaner clergyman in the ANC delegation, said that black youths could desert the organization if the talks broke down.



Mr Joe Slovo, centre, ANC chief of staff, flanked by Mr Mandela and Mr Walter Sisulu in Cape Town yesterday. The three are part of the organization's negotiating team

ANC identity card doing nicely with Afrikaner police

From Gavin Bell, Cape Town

A SIGN of the changing times in South Africa is the appearance of a new identity card - the African National Congress "gold" card. Issued to journalists covering peace talks between the ANC and the Government, it is accepted by white security police with Afrikaners comments along the lines of "That will do nicely, sir".

A few months ago, anyone displaying the spear and shield emblem, printed on the gold-col-

oured cards, may have been bundled into prison. Yet it now dominates mass rallies in townships and is emblazoned on flags, posters and T-shirts throughout the country.

Remarkable images of the entente fostered by President de Klerk and Mr Nelson Mandela may be found in the grounds of the Lord Charles Hotel, a luxurious establishment 30 miles from Cape Town, overlooking the vineyards and spectacular coastline of the western Cape.

The temporary headquarters of the ANC delegation, the perimeter is guarded by government security

agents and the interior by erstwhile "terrorists" of the ANC armed wing (Umkhonto we Sizwe). Visitors are screened and escorted by the Afrikaners to the African nationalists at the front portal. The exchanges between men who, until recently, would have shot each other on sight, are cool but courteous.

Not far away is Robben Island, the grim penitentiary where several members of the ANC delegation spent much of their lives. Even closer is the Victor Verster prison, the residence of Mr Mandela only

three months ago. The venue of the discussions also provides a touch of irony. At the entrance of the 17th-century Cape Dutch estate at Groote Schuur is a weathered bronze relief depicting Jan van Riebeeck, leader of the first settlement at the Cape, stepping on to the shores of Table Bay in 1652, his hand extended to a half-naked and bemused Khoi-Khoi family.

The Groote Schuur homestead is a gracious monument to generations of white supremacy. Taking their places at the negotiating table in the former dining room, where Cecil

Rhodes and a succession of South African Prime Ministers deliberated the affairs of state, the ANC delegates were surrounded by priceless treasures of the colonial past. They are also surrounded by arguably the tightest security apparatus in the country's history, threatened as they are by wild men at both extremes of the political spectrum.

The new-found status of the ANC has been accorded due recognition by the white traffic wardens. On at least one occasion yesterday, the ANC press car averted a heavy parking fine.

Strike at Soweto hospital

From Ray Kennedy, Johannesburg

TONNES of dirty linen were piled high yesterday as Soweto's 2,700-bed, 50-year-old Baragwanath Hospital was brought to a standstill by a strike by 1,500 non-medical workers over pay. Maternity wards were closed because there were no clean sheets and no vests or nappies for newborn babies.

On Tuesday mothers were discharged from the hospital within an hour of giving birth, while the orthopaedic and casualty sections, with greatly reduced staffs, were barely managing to carry on.

Baragwanath is the only hospital in Soweto, the black township outside Johannesburg which is home to an estimated population of more than 2 million people. It also, however, serves hospitals in other townships as well as 11 out-patient clinics in Soweto itself - serving some 6 million people altogether.

Late yesterday, after crisis talks on the spot, Mr Danie Hough, the Administrator of the Transvaal, claimed the situation was under control. Outside, groups of strikers waved African National Congress placards and posters proclaiming: "We want a living wage." Dr Chris van den Heever, the hospital's chief superintendent, said strikers had earlier blocked access to the casualty section and had forced nursing assistants out of wards.

Dr George Louw, in charge of community health, said 30 per cent of the 1.5 million patients seen annually were chronically ill with diseases such as hypertension and diabetes. He warned that, because the strikers include pharmacy workers refusing to operate automatic tablet counters, patients would be unable to obtain their normal supplies of medicines. The implications of this, he said, were "strokes, comas and heart failure".

EC acts to curb lorry 'cancer'

From Michael Binyon, Brussels

CALLING the growth of lorry traffic in the European Community a "cancer" that had to be removed, the EC Environment Commissioner yesterday announced drastic measures to cut noise and pollution by new lorries as part of a long-term plan to switch the movement of goods from road to rail.

Signor Carlo Ripa di Meana proposed cutting the amount of pollution emitted by diesel lorries by up to 60 per cent compared with current standards, virtually enforcing standards stricter than in the United States. He also insisted that manufacturers must introduce significantly quieter lorries, so that the new "whisper" vehicles could comply with strict night-time restrictions in force in Austria and Switzerland.

The stricter emissions standards are to be introduced in

two phases, beginning in July 1992. New engines must then comply with compulsory common standards throughout the Community, and will be introduced for mass production six months later. In the second phase, starting in 1996, emissions standards will be further tightened, giving the truck industry plenty of time to adapt.

The new limits parallel the tougher standards announced for cars last year, and will be enforced in the same time frame.

The first phase will bring the EC into line with limits proposed by both Austria and Switzerland, which are at present locked in argument with Brussels over their unilateral bans on night transit by noisy EC lorries, and their insistence on more lorries being loaded on to trains to cross the Alps.

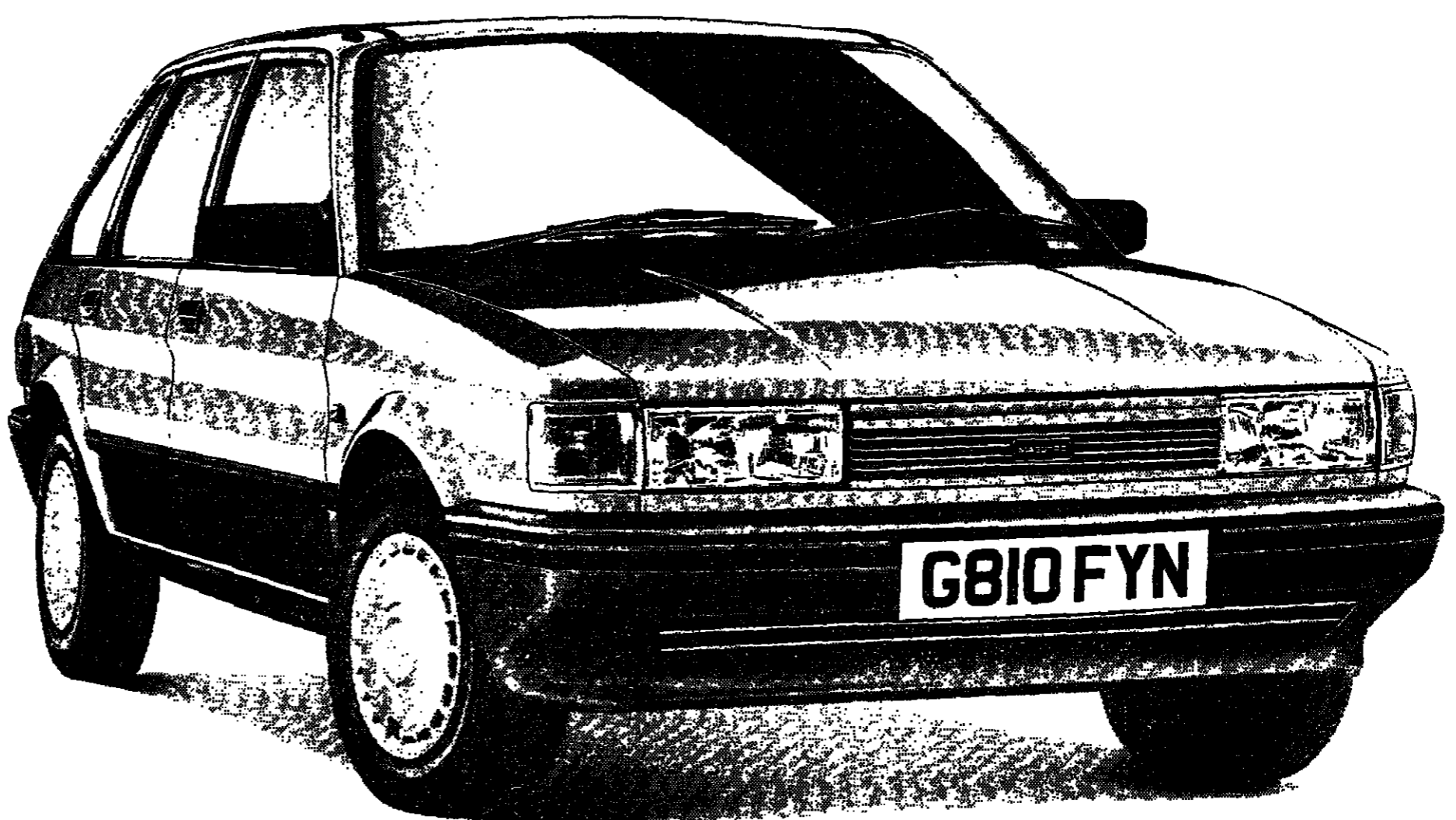
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Shamir's hardline stance perplexes Washington

AMERICAN diplomats in Israel speak of a "worsening crisis" between Israel and the United States over the moribund Middle East peace process and the apparently hardline stance of Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the caretaker Israeli Prime Minister. Observers said this could in turn slow the gathering pace of the release of Western hostages.

Yesterday Mr Moshe Arens, the Israeli Foreign Minister, admitted that he was "worried" by the deterioration in US-Israeli relations, and said America "lacks complete understanding" of the process of forming a new Israeli government on which Mr Shamir is now engaged. He said a new Likud administration would remain committed to the Shamir plan for elections in the occupied territories, but not to attempts to bring about an indirect dialogue between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Hadashot, the Israeli newspaper, however, said that a Likud government would "freeze the peace process and set a collision course with Washington" because a government based on right-wing parties and religious groups was not best fitted to deal with the problems facing Israel.

One of the world's most durable bilateral alliances, between the United States and Israel, is showing alarming signs of strain. Richard Owen in Jerusalem reports

American pressure to be "amenable" about the hostage issue by authorizing the release of Sheikh Abdel Karim Obeid and other Shia Muslim prisoners held by Israel in southern Lebanon.

Israel annually receives large sums in economic and military aid from the US and is often seen by the Arab world as an American "client state". This week, however, Mr Shamir has displeased the



Mr Arens: Worried by downturn in relations

Bush Administration by apparently going out of his way to dismiss the attempts made over the past year by Mr James Baker, the US Secretary of State, to establish an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue.

Mr Avi Pazner, Mr Shamir's media adviser, tried to play down the row, insisting that Mr Shamir had said nothing new in his remarks, which came in a speech on Monday. "Mr Shamir did not say no to the Baker proposals. He simply pointed out that the US plan is not the only way to achieve peace," Mr Pazner said.

American diplomats, however, saw it differently, complaining of "a spate of US-bashing such as we have not seen for a decade". Observers said Washington was unsure whether Mr Shamir's remarks were an attempt to placate far-right groups on which a new coalition government could depend or a mark of his "true colours".

In his controversial remarks, Mr Shamir said Israel

saw no need for a dialogue with the Palestinians in the near future, adding that if such talks did begin there was no need for them to be held in Cairo, as laid down in the Baker plan. Mr Shamir added that Israel did not have to accept every proposal made by the US Secretary of State.

The State Department, reflecting evident US frustration over this curt dismissal of a year of US diplomacy involving Israel, Egypt and the PLO, said Mr Shamir's declaration was "perplexing", given that the US had undertaken its peace efforts in response to an Israeli request to help implement Mr Shamir's own proposal for elections in the occupied territories.

US-Israeli relations are also under strain because of Mr Shamir's open support for new Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, which Washington regards as both illegal and an obstacle to peace efforts. Unrepentant, Mr Shamir said he favoured large-scale settlement in the West Bank and Gaza, but regretted that this was impractical because funds were needed instead to absorb thousands of new immigrants from the Soviet Union in Israel proper. America has threatened to withhold \$400 million (£250 million) worth of housing aid if Soviet Jews are settled beyond the 1967 "green line".

Asked if Israel would release all or some of the 400 Shia prisoners held at Khiam in southern Lebanon as part of a hostage deal, Mr Uri Lubrani, the leading Israeli official responsible for Lebanese affairs, said the country would consider such a step provided that Israel's own prisoners of war and soldiers of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army who were held by Arab groups were included in any exchange of prisoners.

Mr Lubrani denied that Israel was under pressure from the US, but added: "I think each country is obliged to look after its own interests where hostages are concerned." He said he did not believe that Israel would be blamed if an Israeli refusal to release Sheikh Obeid or other Muslim prisoners were to put the potential release of Western hostages in jeopardy.

Haaretz, another Israeli newspaper, has warned that a right-wing Shamir Government will lead to additional US-Israeli tensions and will isolate Israel internationally just as it is beginning to mend fences with several countries, including the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe. Aides to Mr Shamir, however, said the US, the West and the international community in general should judge the forthcoming Shamir administration by its actions.



Friends again: President Assad of Syria, left, and President Mubarak waving to crowds of well-wishers greeting the Egyptian leader's arrival at Damascus airport yesterday. The visit ended a 13-year rift between the countries

Egypt and Syria end their feud

From Michael Theodorou, Nicosia

PRESIDENT Mubarak of Egypt flew to Damascus yesterday for talks with President Assad of Syria on the first visit by an Egyptian leader since the two countries severed relations in 1977, when Cairo began to forge a separate peace with Israel.

The meeting was to discuss the faltering Middle East peace process, ways of achieving Arab unity, and calls for an Arab summit on the exodus of

Soviet Jews to Israel. President Mubarak arrived at 11am to a rapturous reception that included a 21-gun salute and a warm hug from the Syrian leader.

Their embrace, broadcast live by Syrian television, was a potent image that the rift between the two main Arab states involved in the Middle East conflict is over. A military band played the national anthems of the two countries

as hundreds of people waved Syrian and Egyptian flags.

President Mubarak's visit marks another step in Syria's slow rehabilitation in Western eyes at a time when its arch-enemy, Iraq, has lost support because of its alleged attempts to smuggle weapons components and its threats to use chemical warfare in the event of an Israeli nuclear attack. The visit also came just two days after a second American hostage was delivered to freedom through Damascus. Syria received praise from Washington for helping to secure his release, and is said to be as committed to winning freedom for the four British hostages as it is for the six remaining Americans.

Syria has recently begun to tone down its anti-Israeli rhetoric and has signalled a willingness to discuss the Golan Heights issue with Israel. These signs of flexibility are attributed to Moscow's insistence at the end of last year that it would no longer finance Syria's dreams of achieving strategic parity with Israel. President Assad felt his isolation even more acutely when Washington gave Cairo a big role in mediating between Israel and the Palestinians.

Syria and Egypt, which were united between 1958 and 1961 and which fought together in three wars against Israel, have had a long and stormy relationship which reached its lowest ebb in November,

1977, when Anwar Sadat, the late Egyptian President, flew to Jerusalem to begin a peace process that resulted in the Camp David treaty. But neither Egypt's peace nor Syria's hostility have resulted in a Middle East settlement.

There was never personal antipathy between President Mubarak and President Assad, both former fighter pilots whose paths crossed first at an Egyptian air base and later in Moscow. But deep personal rifts remain between other important players in the Arab world. Diplomats in Cairo said President Mubarak would try to end the potentially explosive animosity between President Assad and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

The Syrian President has also been in odds for years with Mr Yassir Arafat, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Despite this, the PLO welcomed the rapprochement between Cairo and Damascus in the belief that a united Arab front would strengthen the Palestinian hand in dealings with Israel.

Mr Arafat has called for an Arab summit to discuss ways of countering the influx of Soviet Jews into Israel. About 35,000 have arrived so far this year and the figure is expected to rise to a million in the next five years. Arab leaders fear many will be settled in the Israeli occupied territories.

Bush hopes 'no-hands' policy will open doors

From Peter Stothard, US Editor, Washington

TODAY'S relations between Israel and the United States might well be dubbed "no-hands diplomacy", since President Bush hopes that, without overt prompting, the Israeli Government will release some of the Shia prisoners it holds in southern Lebanon.

The US cannot make an official request without the risk of appearing to negotiate with kidnappers. It is, however, perhaps no bad thing at the moment for sensitive deals between the two countries to be done in this way — if hands were to be used they might quickly turn to fists.

The relationship between President Bush and Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the Israeli Prime Minister, is at rock bottom. Jewish groups in Washington are used to the ebbs and flows in relations between US and Israeli governments, but they are asking now whether this time something fundamental has changed and, if so, what they should do about it.

The groups accept that, during the Reagan years, they may have grown complacent about the flow of cash and political support; to assure the continuance of American goodwill, it is said, there needs to be a return to basics, a cooler look at what keeps the two countries together.

It is being pointed out that until the 1967 Six-Day War the US was not Israel's chief paymaster and ally. Strong US-Israeli links were forged after the war, the sharp success of which compared so favourably with the US difficulties in Vietnam. Americans rallied to the cause of a brave democracy beset by tyrants and to a united Jerusalem in which all faiths could worship.

US money poured into Israel — and continues to do so virtually unabated to this day, totalling some \$3.6 billion (£2.1 billion) last year. Even now few people think that Congress would fail to support core policies to safeguard the Jewish state.

Some of the surrounding political landscape of the 70s and 80s, however, has clearly changed. Israel's image as a plucky little country has been damaged by its invasion of Lebanon in 1982, and by its military response to the intifada after 1987. Its reputation as a responsible steward of Jerusalem, too, has been badly dented, most recently by

the secret funding of Jewish settlements in the Christian part of the city.

Also, Soviet ambitions in the area are not so clearly a threat — although today's Iraq is arguably as dangerous as previously was any Moscow satellite. Most significant of all, the Middle East "peace process" is losing credibility. Israeli democracy, for all that it may be a beacon in a totalitarian sea, has failed for too long, as the Administration sees it, to deliver a moderate government that will negotiate about peace in good faith.

Mr Shamir is seen as slippery and evasive over both the peace process and the settlement of immigrants from the Soviet Union in the occupied territories. The first is always hard to pin down, but the settlement issue has been characterized by what the White House sees as deliberate deception by Mr Shamir.

Israeli policy on hostages, unlike that of the US, is to negotiate for release of its own captives, currently at least

three, in Islamic hands. The trouble is likely to come because the hostage holders would prefer the Israelis to barter their Shias for American hostages than for Israeli ones — a deal which, even at the best of times for US-Israeli relations, Jerusalem would be unlikely to accept.

The general outlook is seen here as bleak. Mr Shamir's new government is likely to be more difficult to deal with, not less. There is increasing talk here of Israeli electoral reform to reduce the power of extremists — but little hope of quick change.

The intifada is likely to rise again. It may do so at a time when the news from behind what was the Iron Curtain is not there to keep it off the American television screens. Moreover, Mr Baker is not the only one tiring of the diplomatic dance. The Palestine Liberation Organization, too, is wearying of wearing a friendly face and fearful of internal threats to its authority if talking to the US achieves too little for too long.

JERUSALEM NOTEBOOK by Richard Owen

Sounds of discord as emigrés flood to the Promised Land

Deep confusion seems to surround the vexed subject of Israeli censorship and Soviet immigration. In February, with Soviet Jews pouring into Israel in dramatic numbers and the Arab world mobilizing to reduce or halt the new exodus, Israel's military censor declared that all material relating to Soviet Jews had to be submitted to censorship.

Because of the outcry — as much from the Israeli media as from the foreign press — government officials "let it be known" that only two aspects were really "sensitive": the number of Soviet Jews being allowed out, and the routes by which they were arriving in Israel. Such information, it was said, was potentially useful to Arab terrorists intent on disrupting the flow of immigrants, especially those wanting to settle in the occupied territories (which in practice very few have).

The censors had reckoned without the rebellious nature of the Israeli press, not to mention the fact that few of the Government's own ministers seem able to resist a microphone or a television cam-

era. No less a person than Rabbi Yitzhak Peretz, the Minister for Immigration and Absorption, has now disclosed the unnameable figure: 25,000 Soviet Jews have arrived since the beginning of the year, it seems.

As for the routes they use, the fact that most come via Budapest and Bucharest is an open secret, as is Poland's decision to double the number of flights to Tel Aviv from Warsaw.

Military censorship is accepted in Israel when most Israelis believe national security is at stake (nobody discusses Israel's alleged nuclear capacity, for example), but not when the talk at every bus stop is of the need for an urgent national debate on how to cope with the "miracle" of a huge injection of (mostly) educated Russians willing to master Hebrew and learn about Judaism, before they become disillusioned and ask to leave the "Promised Land" either for America, the destination favoured by many, or even perhaps in a few cases back to Moscow, despite fears of growing anti-Semitism in President Gorbachev's Russia.



Zubin Mehta: Flying the flag for high musical standards

Much of the great "national debate" on immigration revolves around how to create new jobs and whether to set up "tent cities" to provide the new immigrants with temporary housing, as in the early days of the Jewish State. But there is a new

headache for Israeli planners: what to do with the estimated 2,000 musicians (and rising) among the newcomers. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, Israel already has enough newly arrived refugees from Soviet symphony orchestras to make up 20 new orchestras.

Russian oboe players, pianists and violinists are having to find new niches in provincial Israeli orchestras from Haifa to Beer-sheva, often at low salaries, and certainly with none of the perks automatically given to the Soviet cultural elite.

Hundreds of talented players are filling slots in municipal police bands, or teaching music at schools in "development towns" in remote regions which do not boast music conservatories. A further handicap is the notoriously limited Soviet repertoire and old-fashioned Soviet techniques. Israeli orchestras are still banned from playing Wagner, but as Zubin Mehta has proved again by conducting the Berlin and the Israel Philharmonic orchestras simultaneously, Israel's musicians can claim the same range and

standards as the best European orchestras.

Last month, Mehta took the Israel Philharmonic to Moscow to show the Russians how it should be done. Ironically, many of his players are former Soviet Jews who have been successfully "absorbed" and are returning to Moscow for the first time — as Israelis rather than Russians.

One of the stranger aspects of all this for anyone who has reported from Moscow is seeing faces once familiar from Soviet human-rights protests popping up again in the quite different Middle East context of Israel — and quite often still protesting. "Once a dissident, always a dissident," as one Soviet activist recently said of Mr Natan Sharansky, the leader of the Soviet Jewish group, Zionists Forum in Israel.

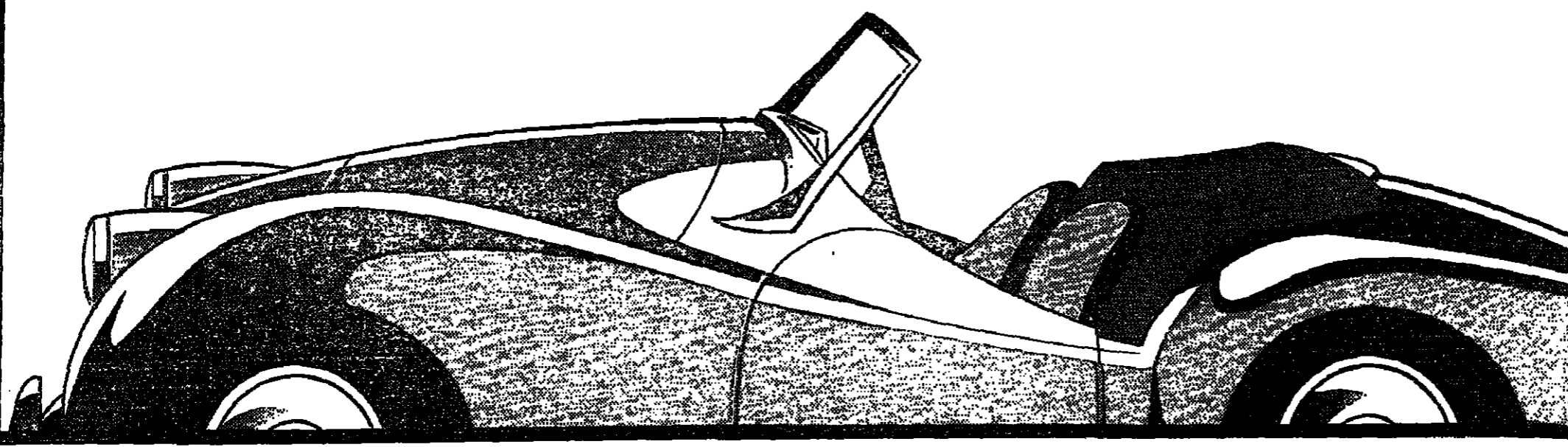
And there is scope for Russian disillusionment. Israeli shops are still full of goods, and freedom of speech is taken to excess. But Israeli bureaucracy is at least as bad as its Soviet counterpart and housing and jobs

are in chronically short supply, while the conflict with Palestinians creates a tense atmosphere.

Ida Nudel, another prominent former prisoner of Zion, went so far as to accuse the Israeli authorities of deliberately holding up "a million and a half Soviet Jews who want to come here" because Israel knows it simply cannot cope. Professor Yirmiyahu Branover, who has set up a high-tech firm to employ newly arrived Soviet scientists, also complained bitterly about the lack of an absorption "master plan".

Those Russians who have made it to Israel and have stayed are adding to the extraordinary kaleidoscope of Israeli society by making and marketing colourful new Russian products for other Israelis such as Oriental Jews to sample. One Soviet-born scientist in Haifa has just produced a kosher variety of caviar, and fruit-flavoured vodkas have proliferated on supermarket shelves — ideal perhaps to sip while watching the new Russian language sub-titles on the early-evening Hebrew television news.

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Thousands join Hindu rally against Pakistan

From Christopher Thomas, Delhi

HUNDREDS of thousands of chanting Hindus descended on central Delhi yesterday, waving saffron flags of militancy in a stunning outburst against Pakistan's supposed interference in secessionist wars in Kashmir and Punjab. The protest was designed to demonstrate the unprecedented political might of orthodox Hindu leaders: after this show of strength there can be no doubt that their movement for Hindutva (Hindu-ness) has reached the masses.

The crowds were whipped up by fervid sadhus (holy men) with gaily-painted faces and dressed in saffron robes, and by politicians bellowing from hundreds of loudspeakers strung from trees, poles and fences over an area of several square miles.

The protest was against Muslim countries in general as much as Pakistan in particular. Speakers said Saudi Arabia, Iran and other governments were aiding Kashmiri Muslim separatists. The crowds yelled anti-Muslim slogans, sending a chill through India's 100 million-strong Islamic population.

Kashmir valley Hindus, known as Pandits, were present, too. They have been driven from their homes and jobs under threat from Muslim militants; it is their plight that adds such a tragic personal dimension to the rise of Muslim fundamentalism in the beleaguered valley.

For all the reports of bombings and shootings, there are signs that India's massive security operation is bringing the valley under control. There is widespread talk in government circles of launching an early political initiative if the relative calm continues.

"The Government is ready to admit that mistakes were made in the past," a senior official said. "It is prepared to discuss change. The mood in Kashmir has moderated a great deal since January, when ordinary people felt that India was losing control of the valley. It is now realized that there can be no question of seceding to Pakistan or becoming independent, because if India ever lost Kashmir the rest of the country would split apart."

The mass demonstration was organized by the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which increasingly regards itself as the party of the next government. It rejects the label of fundamentalism; but that as it may, it is the inspiration behind the rise of Hindu awareness in northern India and has been instrumental in raising the political temperature over Pakistan.

Its symbol, the lotus flower, is daubed on the walls of every village in the Hindi belt. The party controls two key northern states, Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh; it is the kingmaker in Rajasthan, Gujarat and the giant state of Bihar; and it keeps the minority central Government afloat.

Mr Lal Krishnan Advani, its leader — who was educated by Irish fathers at St Patrick's in Karachi, before partition — has carried the BJP from obscurity to dominance in a remarkably short time. Five years ago it had just two MPs in the Lok Sabha (lower house); now it has 66.

It uses the Kashmir crisis to portray Hindus as a people under siege from the Muslim world, a tactic that has paid off. Yesterday's demonstration has firmly established its claim to mass grassroots support in the Hindi belt — once the terrain of the Congress (I) party, which was driven out of northern India in last November's general election.

BJP leaders yesterday laid out their demands over Kashmir: abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution giving special status to Jammu and Kashmir (forbidding non-Kashmiris, for example, to own land or property); sealing the border; and the creation of an intelligence operation to root out subversives. They demanded a "bullet-for-bullet" approach, saying the Government should destroy terrorist bases and training camps in Pakistani territory.

Indian politicians always talk as though such camps were an established fact. Arms do flow across the line of control in Kashmir, but there is no convincing evidence of direct government involvement or of training camps. Pakistan does give full support to the uprising, however, and therefore critics say it bears a good deal of responsibility for encouraging terrorism among a peaceable people.



A radiant Mrs Paoletto with her daughter, Elke, at their Queensland home

Bubble baby beats the odds

From Robert Cockburn, Sydney

A NEW world has opened up for Mrs Debra Paoletto. She has defied medical opinion and the allergy that imprisons her in a sealed, sterile "bubble" to give birth to a girl.

Until daughter Elke's arrival last week, Mrs Paoletto, aged 26, a former Australian beauty queen, lived alone in a room coated with porcelain at the home of her parents-in-law in Queensland. Doctors say exposure to toxic crop sprays as a child has left her with an allergy to the 20th century.

Her "environmental illness" is a reaction to just about all man-made substances, giving her dizzy spells and vomiting. It was also believed she could not carry a child for a full nine-month term.

Elke was born into the arms of her father, Mr Christian Paoletto, aged 26, in the protective bubble room after a 20-hour labour. However, it will be another four weeks before medical tests reveal whether Elke has inherited her mother's allergy and will have

to lead a similarly sheltered life.

Mrs Paoletto's isolation ended after her health improved enough for her husband to move into her room. Before that they had barely been able to touch. But Mr Paoletto still has to wash himself with bicarbonate of soda before entering the room.

Other precautions include shielding Mrs Paoletto from light bulbs and the television set with layers of glass.

She avoids books because of her reaction to the ink, and must keep to a diet of 30 basic foods. She can only dress in natural materials like silk and cotton.

It is hoped the family may one day be able to move to more natural surroundings, possibly a rainforest in northern Queensland.

Medical briefing, page 18

Rebel attack on Cristiani house

SAN SALVADOR LEFT-WING Salvadorean rebels launched an offensive yesterday, attacking the homes of President Cristiani and a Cabinet minister and firing rockets at the national electoral headquarters. The President was unhurt in the early-morning onslaught.

However, Major Mauricio Chávez Cáceres, an armed forces spokesman, told reporters that an army captain and two policemen were killed in fighting in the area. The offensive by rebels of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front was the first big attack in the Central American nation since last November, and coincided with peace moves between the rebels and the Government.

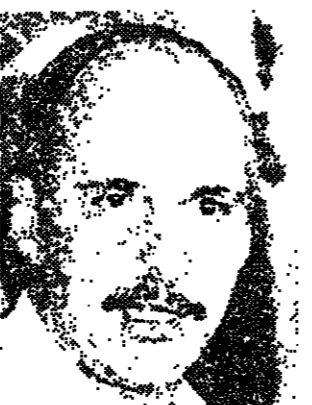
Major Chávez Cáceres said the rebels attacked the President's residence with rifle fire

during a series of attacks in the exclusive Escalon area in the north-west of San Salvador. Rebels also launched a rocket attack against the private home of Señor Mauricio Stubig, the Public Works Minister, and the headquarters of the Central Electoral Council. Fighting also erupted near the Sheraton hotel in Escalon, but Major Chávez Cáceres said that he could give no details.

More than 70,000 Salvadoreans have died in the 10-year civil war. Rebel representatives said on Monday that peace talks tentatively scheduled with the Government for today had been postponed so that both sides could present proposals to Señor Alvaro de Soto, the United Nations mediator in Mexico.

Military aid to El Salvador from the United States has been running at more than \$1 million (£600,000) a day, but the US House of Representatives foreign affairs committee has recommended cutting it by at least half if an investigation into the murder of six Jesuit priests during the November offensive is not seriously and professionally conducted.

Major Chávez Cáceres said the rebels also attacked targets in the eastern town of San Miguel and the central town of San Vicente in yesterday's offensive, causing at least one death. Emergency services said the rebels also blew up several electricity pylons in San Salvador. (Reuters)



President Cristiani: Key target for the guerrillas

Police step in as Red Indian feud kills two

By Charles Bremner, New York, and Our Foreign Staff

ABOUT 500 US and Canadian police moved into the St Regis-Akwesasne Mohawk Indian reservation yesterday after two men were killed in a daylong gunbattle that pitted dozens of heavily armed "warriors" against traditionalists opposed to a gambling business run by the tribe.

The Canadian authorities welcomed the decision of Mr Mario Cuomo, the Governor of New York, to overcome his reluctance and send state troopers on to the six-square-mile reservation which straddles the border between northern New York and Ontario province.

Matthew Pyke, aged 22, had died in hospital in Malone, New York State, of injuries suffered in the battle. The body of a second victim, Wilbur Edwards, aged 32, was found slumped against a cabin in the Canadian portion of the reservation late on Tuesday afternoon.

Sporadic gunfire could still be heard as police took up positions in the early hours, marching through scenes of burnt-out cars and roadblocks reminiscent of Belfast or Beirut. Mohawks told the police that a house had been bombed in retaliation for the deaths, which were the first since the self-styled Warrior Society and their vigilante opponents began firing thousands of rounds from AK-47 assault rifles and throwing grenades a week ago.

The area where the killings took place, though in Quebec, is accessible only through New York territory and state police had to provide an escort for investigating officers of the Quebec provincial police.

Otherwise the reservation remained sealed off to outsiders yesterday as authorities on both sides of the border sought ways of cooling passions. State officials, members of the clergy and experts from the Martin Luther King Centre in Atlanta are on the reservation trying to mediate in the dispute.

Traffic across an international bridge that spans the St Lawrence river at that point was rerouted to another bridge 30 miles away.

Between 9,000 and 10,000 Mohawks live on the self-governing reservation. On Tuesday, in the midst of the open battle, Mr Harold Tardell, the Mohawk chief, pleaded with Mr Cuomo to call out the National Guard. "We don't know what else to do. Capitulation and living in terror is too high a price."

The police action follows

days of protest from the Canadian Government, which had been calling for intervention by the New York police. Following the tradition of respecting the sovereignty of Indian reservations, Mr Cuomo had been urging the Mohawks to resolve the dispute themselves.

At issue in the feud are six casinos, started as bingo parlours in 1984 with the profits ostensibly going to tribal welfare. They evolved into full-scale gambling palaces with fruit machines and poker tables patronized by whites from both Canada and the US.

Traditionalists complained that the operation was being controlled by the New York Mafia and that millions of dollars of profits were being channelled to outside backers. They also allege that the reservation is being used for large-scale smuggling of drugs, cigarettes and petrol, all of which are much more expensive in Canada than in the United States.

After an FBI raid last July, the Warrior Society, armed with Uzis as well as AK-47s, took control of the American sector to protect the casinos. Last month, the anti-gambling faction set up roadblocks to stop gamblers reaching the casinos.

A jurisdictional maze involving US and Canadian law and traditional tribal rights has complicated efforts by mediators and the authorities to resolve the dispute. Beyond the gambling feud lies a long-standing struggle between the traditional leaders of the Akwesasne Mohawks, who trace their authority to the mid-18th century, and the inheritors of trusteeships granted to the tribe by the US Government in the 19th century.

The fight for control has already erupted into violence four times this century, with the last feud in 1971.

Mr Cuomo: Overcame his reluctance to intervene



Germans questioned over Libya plant fire

Rome LIBYA's official news agency said that two West Germans were being interrogated in connection with the mysterious fire at the Rabta chemical plant in Libya in March.

A West German company had helped build the plant, which the United States claims produced poison gas. The Jana news agency identified the Germans being questioned as a company executive and a technician for the firm. (AP)

Heroin arrest

Canberra — Mr Prasart Yooyen, allegedly the main importer of heroin into Australia, has been arrested in Thailand in an international operation that would shatter the Australian drug network, Mr Michael Tate, the Justice Minister, said. (AFP)

News closure

Sava — The Fijian authorities ordered the closure of Pacnews, a regional news service in the South Pacific, and expelled two West Germans, after a row triggered by calls for greater freedom of information here. (AFP)

Treason charge

Port Moresby — Mr Paul Tohian, who was sacked as Papua New Guinea police commissioner in March for allegedly trying to overthrow the Government, was charged with treason. (Reuters)

Boats repulsed

Kuala Lumpur — Malaysia has pushed more than 6,000 Vietnamese boat people away from its shores, including 2,268 in 47 boats since mid-February, diplomatic sources said. (Reuters)

Everest forecast

Wellington — New Zealand teenagers trying to clean up the base camp area on Nepal's Mount Everest expect to collect at least five tonnes of rubbish, Mr John Gully, the expedition leader, said. (AFP)

Mine disaster

Peking — Thirty miners were killed and another 11 injured in a mine explosion in the north-eastern Chinese province of Heilongjiang last month, according to a regional radio broadcast. (AP)

Police death

Colombo — At least four people, including a policeman, have died in a renewed outburst of violence in Sri Lanka, the authorities said. (AFP)

Norway wants to restart whaling

From A Correspondent, Oslo

NORWAY is in effect to seek a resumption of commercial whaling after a moratorium of almost five years, ministry sources confirmed yesterday. The move is set to provoke the wrath of conservation and animal-rights groups.

After pressure from American conservationists, Oslo agreed in 1986 to join the moratorium recommended by the International Whaling Commission (IWC), a self-regulatory body whose decisions carry great moral and scientific authority but are not legally binding on members.

The commission is to hold its annual meeting in The Netherlands in July, and it is there that Norway will press for the removal of the small minke whale from the list of protected species.

The decision, which has not yet been officially announced here, was made after a five-year, £10 million research programme into whale stocks by the Norwegian fisheries and environment ministries in 1988. Although far from complete, the survey — which is meant to cover the equally

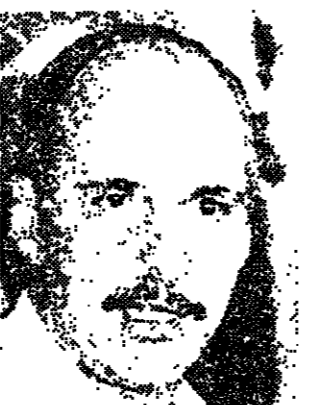
controversial animal-rights issue of sealing — shows, according to Norwegian scientists, that minke whale populations have been seriously underestimated since the 1950s at least.

Estimates of 20,000 animals in Norwegian waters have been amended to 77,000: more than sufficient, the Norwegians insist, to justify the resumption of commercial whaling. The IWC had planned to review its moratorium at the July meeting.

The United States, Britain and Ireland are expected to press for an extension of the ban. Pressure from the Nordic countries — both Iceland and the Danish Faroe Islands were previously keen whalers — to resume commercial whaling would almost certainly provoke political reprisals.

American conservationists have consistently lobbied for bans on Nordic fish imports if those nations failed to mend their ways.

Norway, moreover, has been accused of dumping farmed salmon on the US market at giveaway prices in recent years.



President Cristiani: Key target for the guerrillas

Satellite sex films anger Alabama

From Charles Bremner, New York

IN a case that sets an ominous precedent for the satellite television industry, a prosecutor in Alabama is trying to extradite the directors of a New York broadcasting company to face criminal charges for transmitting sexually explicit films from space into his county.

The prosecution, which is the first to pit information age technology against 19th century obscenity laws, has already driven the Home Dish Satellite Corporation out of business and dragged in some of America's largest telecommunications conglomerates, including GTE, Spacenet and Hughes.

The affair began when Mr Jimmy Evans, the Montgomery County prosecutor, who is running for election to the office of state Attorney-General, declared war on smut. He found that 30 local residents were watching "R-Tuxedo Channel, which features 'rated' films — those with mild erotic content — and 22 were subscribing to the Exxasy Channel, which transmits hardcore sex films. The directors of Home Dish, who had never set foot in

Alabama, were then indicted by a Montgomery grand jury under local obscenity laws.

Several big communications companies that carry the Home Dish signal across America and beyond immediately dropped it, forcing the flourishing New York company to close. Mr Evans has now applied to Mr Mario Cuomo, the New York state Governor, for the directors' extradition to his state.

Defending Home Dish, Mr Norman Dorsen, the president of the American Civil Liberties Union, said: "It is shocking to think that Alabama could reach out and chill free speech in all 50 states."

The case is already sending a chill through the offices of the big satellite-cable networks which transmit films to over half of American households. "If there's any kind of trouble with Tuxedo, there's potential trouble for all the major cable companies like HBO, Cinemax and the Movie Channel," Mr Dorsen, who is himself acting as a defence lawyer, told The New York Times. All those companies regularly broadcast films with an "R" rating. The

great majority of popular commercial films fall into the category.

Mr Mark Ellison, chief counsel for the Satellite Broadcasting Communications Association, said the trade was particularly troubled by the indictment of the Tuxedo network.

Along with Home Dish, the Montgomery grand jury has indicted GTE, Spacenet and United States Satellite for carrying the alleged obscene signals. The case is the second in the country in a month in which local prosecutors in conservative parts of America have used local obscenity laws against art or entertainment that is tolerated on the national level.

In the other highly publicized case, prosecutors in Cincinnati have put the director of the city's art museum on trial for holding an exhibition of photographs by the late Robert Mapplethorpe that won critical acclaim when staged in New York and other cities.

Civil liberties groups say the Montgomery case reaches far beyond local concerns because, if successful, it could open the way to the bounding of broadcasters across the country.

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Thatcher's choice

Ronald Butt

Local elections are always used much more than they should be for registering an opinion on national politics rather than voting on the performance of the local authority. Today, the voters seem likely to carry this habit to an unprecedented extreme by using their local franchise overwhelmingly to deliver a verdict on the Government, and on Mrs Thatcher in particular, for an act of national policy: the replacement of the rates by the poll tax.

If the poll tax had not been invented, two other issues would have damaged the Tories today: the return of inflation with high mortgage interest rates, and dissatisfaction with the Government's general social attitudes. But the poll tax has made this largely a single-issue election, compelling many natural supporters of prudent and rational Conservative councils to vote for the imprudent and extremist Labour attitudes that the tax was intended to call to account.

The Government can hardly complain about that. Our political system rightly has no place for referendums on single issues, and when the voters are overwhelmingly concerned to drive home their opinion on a single issue, their only remedy is to use their votes in whatever elections are to hand. They have to weigh the knowledge that they are damaging a party they otherwise support, and helping one they regard as irresponsible, against the fear that if they loyally vote Tory, the Government may argue that the tax is not unpopular after all. So they can only vote as their consciences tell them. Single-issue voting in general elections has been an honourable tradition in British politics; Irish home rule, tariff reform and the powers of the House of Lords could all be cited. The Government is fortunate that it is now on trial only in local elections and can hope to put matters right before the general election.

The more one thinks on this extraordinary exercise in self-destruction, the more incredible it seems. The poll tax is a comment on Mrs Thatcher's general style of government. She herself now appears as the prime mover in the latest attempts to make the tax saleable. It is as though, descending to the world of lesser ministers, she had suddenly observed their errors and ordained that they should be put right.

Yet though the tax was not Mrs Thatcher's invention, it was the creation of ministers (and officials) fulfilling her personal will to abolish the rates. There have been, notably, William Waldegrave, who chaired the internal Environment departmental committee which produced the idea, and his senior departmental minister, Kenneth Baker; Nicholas Ridley, who enthusiastically em-

braced it because it seemed to contain goodly free-market dogma; and Chris Patten, who now defends his unhappy inheritance with stiches and patches.

Yet if this is the adverse side of Mrs Thatcher's style of government, with her personal dominance and the reluctance of people around her to tell her that what she wants cannot be done, it is a style to which the country owes much. It was thanks to her will that the nerve was found to turn away from the old inflationary practices in public financing, to legislate to reform trade unions and to privatize publicly-owned industries to an extent thought impossible. History will record that her government changed the political agenda, forcing even Labour to try to reform itself.

The obverse side of Mrs Thatcher's virtues, however, is her belief that her will and instinct are infallible. This is the besetting sin of successful politicians, who are tempted to overreach themselves, so risking their own destruction. It is not that Mrs Thatcher refuses to listen. Though she usually contradicts, she does hear what is said and often ends up recycling the points put to her. But she tends to listen later than is wise. The controversy over European political union illustrates the point. It is now claimed for her that at Dublin she forced the "political unionists" to see the snags in their own brass talk. In fact, they already knew the difficulties, and their over-emphasized argument was largely designed to make her join the talking. She has done so.

Similarly, she has been bombarded with warnings about the poll tax from her own party (not to mention this column) for the past three years. Her reaction has been to assume that anyone who generally supports her but offers criticism is wet or disloyal. She has thus placed many Tory voters in the dilemma of either seeming to approve a tax they reject or of bolstering the Labour attitudes to local government which the tax was supposed to curb.

If the censure on the Tories today is on anything like the scale indicated by the opinion polls, how should they prepare for the general election? A challenge to Mrs Thatcher's leadership would probably split the party, doing irreparable damage. The realistic question is whether she might decide to hand on the leadership voluntarily, if she thought or was advised that this was the only way of saving the nation from a Labour Party still unfit for office.

It is not in her nature to quit; she believes in herself and sees nobody able to do the job better. But who in the present state of politics dare make predictions? One thing only is clear. After today, she and her party have to think where they are going with no preconceptions.

...and moreover

CLEMENT FREUD

On my new passport, they have omitted a line asking about "Occupation". I miss that. As a cook, I wrote "Caterer" in the space provided. I became a caterer and wrote "Company director", was a journalist and put "Writer", went into Parliament and called myself "Politician". Now they just want to know name, place and date of birth, height — in metres (which is meaningless) — and there is a space for "Distinguishing marks" which presumably refers to unusual things beneath your shoulders, for they insist upon a photo from which immigration officials could tell if you had two heads, or were missing an ear.

As there was never a good reason for officialdom to know the occupation of a passport holder, people tended to write in it what they chose: I toyed with ballroom dancer, had an actor friend who wrote "international lawyer", maintaining that it got him better accommodation in French hotels.

Having just spent a day in a sandwich factory in Wigan, I might now describe myself as "Sandwich-maker". I learnt the art of sandwich-making at the age of 16 from a man called Edgar, who was assistant larder chef at the Dorchester. I watched him one afternoon, after missing the taxi taking my fellow apprentice cooks to Stamford Bridge, as he prepared sandwiches. Edgar took a long brown loaf, pared from it all the rind but that at the base, and carved the bread horizontally, producing slices that were 18 inches long and extremely thin. These he buttered with a palette knife and every other slice was generously piled with thin rounds of cucumber that had been strewn with salt and pressed between chopping boards. The confection was made, cut into soldiers, arranged on a doily placed on a silver dish and garnished with mustard and cress. "Edgar," I said to him at 5.15 pm on that autumn afternoon in 1940, "these are wonderful sandwiches."

"No, boy," he replied. "These are sandwiches."

I had expected the Wigan factory to be highly automated, thought that loaves of bread

would be mechanically sliced and spread, filled and sealed, labelled and packaged in lots of a dozen, with perhaps a mechanic or two standing in attendance to monitor the process and programme the computer from cheese and tomato through tuna fish to ham.

I thought wrong. The sandwich factory in Wigan is labour-intensive, entirely feminine, scrupulously clean and very cold for the greater well-being of the product. To gain admission, you have to wear a hair-net around your head and a hat on the hair-net, a starched white coat, buttoned down to the knees and wellingtons. Thus attired, I stepped into a trough of disinfectant, made my way through a curtain of thick slabs of plastic and found hundreds of women dressed as I was, making sandwiches pretty much as one makes them at home: unwrap the loaf, butter the slices, dab on the filling and smooth it, put on the top slice, though after that, for the cutting, packing and labelling machinery does take over.

The two sandwiches that I had designed, which the good ladies of Greater Manchester (what used to be called Lancashire) are making, will come on stream at the end of this month, racing around the land in nearly 500 InterCity buffet cars. Think not what you can do for Wigan, consider what Wigan is doing for the travelling public: every step of the operation approved by the men from the Ministry; not an iota of salmonella, listeria or mad cow disease as far as the eye can see — just bespoke oatmeal and malted brown bread with two grams of butter per slice, 55 grams of corned beef and tomato chutney in one sandwich, 55 grams of fresh skinless, mustard and dill mayonnaise in the other, the news of their interior printed on tastefully decorative labels, as is the date of manufacture.

I am really sorry that old Edgar is up in the great display cabinet in the sky. He had the top joints missing from two of the fingers on his left hand — an occupational hazard, but certainly worth a mention under "Distinguishing marks". I think he would have approved.

Norman Barry sees a growing concern with business ethics as anti-capitalism in disguise

When the businessman is victimized

Four schools do start teaching children about business enterprise, wealth creation and how to be entrepreneurs, as the National Curriculum Council proposes, Britain rather than the United States will become the arch defender of capitalist values. For in the US an anti-business mentality is growing fast. It emanates from academia and the media, and is succeeding in tying business up in restrictive regulations.

Most of us agree that business dealing ought to be conducted under conventional rules of justice, respecting individual rights and property, but some people with a distaste for making money wish to add more extensive moral duties. For example, they say that businesses should be responsible for preventing local unemployment, should ensure equal employment of minority groups, and should go beyond the normal recognition of property rights with regard to the environment. Such moral zeal tends eventually to be reflected in legislation which raises prices, cuts into profits and

lowers employment: the costs are ultimately borne by the consumer.

A classic example is the Clean Air Bill now going through Congress, which will cost American industry an extra \$40 billion a year, making it less competitive internationally. This has already led to protests by coalminers in West Virginia who fear for their jobs when it becomes law. No doubt when unemployment rises because of the new regulations, the charge that "capitalism has failed" will be made once again.

Some environmental problems cannot be solved by the traditional common law method of leaving aggrieved property owners to sue the violators — for example, there needs to be legislation to reduce noxious emissions that damage the atmosphere — but there is an increasing tendency to indict large corporations under criminal law, so that they have to pay massive fines in addition to the penalties incurred in civil actions. Exxon is facing the possibility of such a fine for the oil spill in Alaska last year. This would hardly be fair to the

shareholders, who had nothing to do with the alleged criminal activities. Of course companies should pay for damage to the environment, but use of the law against corporations in these cases is an excuse to punish them with unlimited fines, while it also allows individual wrongdoers within the company the opportunity to evade full responsibility.

The moralists' animus is strongest against the stockmarket. Trading in securities is not considered real production, and the need for it is only grudgingly conceded. The business moralists want to hedge it with all manner of restrictions that block the circulation of information. Insider trading is condemned out of hand, with no analysis of the economics or ethics of the phenomenon. In fact it enables information to be transmitted so that share prices quickly and accurately reflect the economic value of a company. Who is harmed by it? The outsider who hangs on to his shares gains from their increased value, and the one who sells his shares early

to an insider simply does not obtain as much of their increased value as he would like.

The prohibitions of insider trading seem to be under the illusion that everyone should have equal access to information, which is impossible. As long as markets are open and efficient, the gains will quickly be dispersed. Only in cases where an insider has stolen information or is in breach of contract can we say unreservedly that the practice is immoral.

The virtually impossible task of policing insider trading has led the Federal Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to assume draconian powers. On Wall Street it is now difficult to know what is or is not legitimate use of information. The SEC has been spread so wide that it is difficult to distinguish between criminal activity, as in the Boesky case, which involved bribery and extortion, and the efficient exploitation of scarce information.

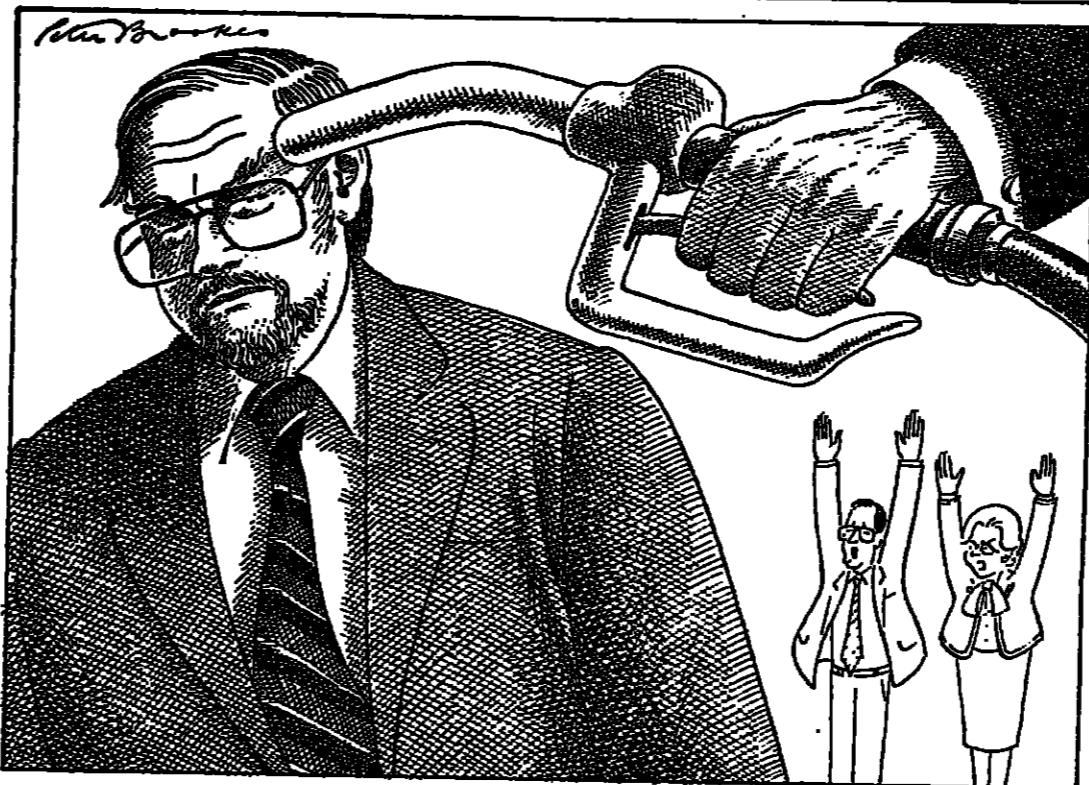
Although Michael Milken, the inventor of the junk bond, made a plea bargain admitting guilt for

some offences, one suspects that he has been investigated with such zeal because he is a highly successful innovator who made a lot of money and became a threat to the financial establishment. The much maligned corporate raids and hostile takeovers made possible by junk bonds disturbed the sleepy managements of inefficient corporations. The motive may have been short-term profit, but in many cases the long-term effect has been beneficial for American industry.

The necessity of competition and profit in commerce does not exempt businessmen from moral constraints, but neither does it license politicians, legislators and intellectuals to set ethical standards that they themselves do not conspicuously meet. America's amazing productivity may survive the enervating effects of legislated "business ethics", but poorer countries will be better off teaching the benefits of competition and enterprise in the classroom. The author is professor of politics at the University of Buckingham.

Cowardice in the face of Moscow's empty threat

Bernard Levin finds a 1930s appeasement parallel to the Western refusal to stand up for Lithuania



I am not sure whether I am obliged to declare an interest before I begin today, so to be on the safe side I shall do so. My blood is exactly half Lithuanian; my father came from that country to England, where he met my mother. I don't know what my paternal ancestry has done for me; we Lithuanians are reputed to like salty and spicy food, and indeed my tastes do run in that direction, though it is not much to go on. But assuredly it is not necessary to be of Lithuanian descent to look with anger and shame upon the western world's betrayal of Lithuania, however obviously predictable it was to all but the most naive.

I suppose Britain has the best excuse; having sold Hong Kong into Chinese bondage (getting nothing but a forged receipt in return), we were hardly in a position to take a stand for justice towards Lithuania. After all, cowardice and betrayal can be named prudence and realism, and used in the Baltic periphery as conveniently as in the Asian one.

Where treachery reigns, we need waste little time on ineptitude, though President Bush certainly has a claim on that section of the anthologies; a bold announcement from the White House, promising sanctions to check Gorbachev's crushing of the Baltic revolution, was followed 48 hours later by a statement to the effect that there would certainly be no American sanctions or indeed any action at all, and where in the world did anybody get the idea that there might be? (Never mind Harry Truman; can you see Reagan, Nixon or LBJ performing so ignominiously a somersault?)

Next, to no one's surprise, came the Pinks and Perky of the EC, urging the Lithuanians to go away and leave them alone. One particular Lithuanian did precisely that; he went to Moscow and set himself on fire outside the Bolshoi Theatre, no doubt convinced (wrongly, as it turned out) that Mitterand and Kohl would at least hurry to the spot and piddle on him literally, having already done so metaphorically. The rest of the EC has abruptly taken a vow of silence, and I was very sorry to see the Norwegians, stout-hearted people that they are, being the first to deny Lithuania help. Why, even Bill Deedes has been chattering about *Realpolitik*, and speaking it wrongly, what's more, like everybody else.

What exactly are we afraid of? Norway has a tiny stretch of border with the Soviet Union; does it really suppose that the Russians would have invaded had it agreed to supply Lithuania with the oil which the beleaguered country so badly needs? Did Bush believe that if he had not run away from his promise, Gorbachev would have started a third world war? Was the EC anxious to betray Lithuania because otherwise he would not allow its members to lend him vast sums of money (none of which they will ever see again, though that is another, and very familiar, story) to keep his tottering economy going for a few more months?

Well, why are we so frightened of Gorbachev? And then can be no doubt that we are, as witness the extraordinary argument going on about Germany. With the most astonishing impudence, Gorbachev has said, several times, that the accession of a united Germany to NATO, if NATO remains as it is now, would be "unaccept-

able". Since Germany is already a member of NATO, and nothing has happened other than that roughly a quarter of the population has until recently been illegally deprived by force from taking part in their country's life, the complete Germany has no need to "join" NATO, and the Soviet Union has no standing at all in the matter, let alone a right to help decide what Germany does in the way of defence. But this obvious truth is not, as it should be, proudly proclaimed by NATO or any of the leaders of its member countries; indeed, such comments as have been made imply that the Soviet Union's position on Germany and NATO is quite reasonable, or at least that nothing should be said on the subject in case Gorbachev takes umbrage.

But that still does not explain why we are all so afraid yet again, simply asks the question yet again. The cliché answer, which nobody has bothered to examine since the cliché was coined, is that he might be overthrown, and replaced by

some horrid communist, who would probably nationalize the means of production, distribution and exchange, and for good measure re-establish the Soviet empire; that President Havel of Czechoslovakia would be shot, or even prohibited from putting on his plays, that Lech Walesa would be obliged to shave off his moustache, the East German Politburo would be reconstituted under the collective leadership of Trusch, Rubbisch and Schweep (all three of whom would be respectfully interviewed by Mr Robert Maxwell), and Stalin would be cryogenically reconstituted and put back in Red Square alongside Lenin.

Now: the Soviet Union is bankrupt, disintegrating, incapable of managing its affairs, hungry, filthy (that is not a term of abuse, but a recognition that soap, toothpaste and lavatory paper are precious substances, almost never to be found in the shops), incapable of making anything which the rest of the world wants to buy,

corrupt, homeless, crime-ridden, vengeful, despairing, angry and drunk. Reader: would you want to rule over such a pit of ordure, reduced to such a condition by three-quarters of a century of mendacity and murder?

Very well; you and I would not, but power, be it power only over an insolvent whorehouse, is a most potent drug: read Gibbon and see how the Emperors for a day preened themselves before having their throats cut. Somebody, if Gorbachev fell, would happily take over.

Do you tell me that such a man, desperately trying to prevent his country collapsing entirely into a wilderness of banditry and barter, would be in a position to make inquiries of the rest of the world, let alone demands or threats? Could a man incapable of preventing the Ukraine from setting up an independent nation even think of reclaiming the lands of the Soviet empire? Could a man who would need all his energies to prevent famine and starvation manage to make faces at the West, let alone make it change its policies? And could a man who would have to spend hours every day thinking of ways to avoid being lynched announce that Germany's membership of an unchanged NATO was unacceptable?

And that is the West's excuse for the betrayal of Lithuania. The gaunt spectre of Neville Chamberlain rises to speak again his words of infamy: "...a quarrel in a far-off country between people of whom we know nothing". But he should have known much; and today our leaders do, Churchill's words come back as well as Chamberlain's: "You had a choice between war and dishonour. You chose dishonour, and you will get war." But the whole point of today's infamy is that we know perfectly well that we shall not get war; we shall not get so much as a raspberry or a snarl.

There is another famous peroration from those days: it came from Jan Masaryk, the Czechoslovak foreign minister, and it was spoken to Chamberlain and Halifax, the Joint Appeasers-in-Chief. "If you have sacrificed my country," he said, "to preserve the peace of the world, I shall be the first to applaud you. But if not, gentlemen, may God have mercy on your souls."

Over: the battle of the bugs

At least George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev will have something to sign at the superpower summit in Washington at the end of the month. Although slow progress may mean there is no arms reduction deal to shake hands over, they will end the long-running feud over the bugging of each other's embassy. Work on the half-constructed American embassy in Moscow was halted in 1985 when a Senate select committee found evidence of a "truly massive" attempt to install electronic eavesdropping devices. In response, the Americans refused the Russians permission to move into their new Washington embassy on Mount Alto. The unfinished building in Moscow has been costing the Americans \$1 million a year in maintenance ever since, while the Russians' new building also remains deserted. Ivan Selin, a US under-secretary of state, says there is agreement in principle to sign a deal at the summit. The agreement will mean that the US embassy building will be demolished, at a cost of \$270 million, leaving only the foundations. They too are full of bugs, but these will be neutralized by a "security shield" placed between the foundations and the new building, which will be constructed of prefabricated blocks shipped from America. Only then will the Russians be allowed to move into their new Washington home.

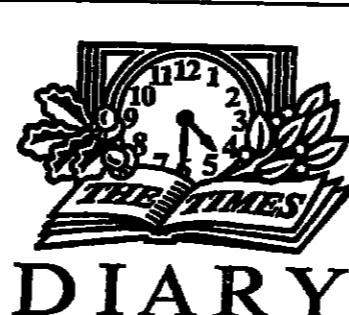
The Soviets employed an American construction firm for their building, but having deployed

three eagle-eyed observers to every 10 American labourers, they are confident that their Washington building is not bugged. So how did they manage to bug the American building so comprehensively? The answer is that the Americans tried to do it on the cheap, using only 20 or 30 observers to watch as many as 800 Soviet construction workers.

Perrier is bubbling back and its crisis-management team has pulled off another coup. With the distinctively shaped bottles now back on the shelves, it has arranged for Friends of the Earth to offer a virtual endorsement of its product as "environmentally sound". The firm is joining forces with Friends of the Earth by sponsoring a green fashion show in aid of the world's



threatened rainforests later this month. Perrier jumped at an approach for sponsorship, not blind to the commercial benefits of Jonathon Porritt being seen sipping their new benzene-free stuff in public. Highlights of the show will include new outfits by



Katherine Hamnett and Bruce Oldfield, among others, inspired by the rainforest theme, and all designers have been encouraged to use eco-friendly materials. Presumably that precludes feather boas, but there should be enough feathers around the venue is the bird gallery of the Natural History Museum, full of distinctly unecological stuffed birds.

Must be true

Tuesday's Prime Minister's question time was one of the rowdiest for a long time, but you would never know it from the official record in *Hansard*. Liberal Democrat MP Alan Beith was seen on television denouncing the "ritualized, scripted chanting from the Tory benches, that sounded more like an audition for a chorus line", but *Hansard* simply recorded "[Interruption]". Ian Church, the editor of *Hansard*, says that it has followed the same procedures of sanitizing unpleasantness between members since 1907. Even the arrival of radio and television has not led to any changes, although the practice of allowing MPs to "correct" their

speeches after they have been made now means that what is heard on the airwaves can be quite different from what is recorded in *Hansard*. The definitive ruling on such matters was made by the former Speaker, George Thomas, in 1980. "I am not going to accept the BBC recording as in any way a check upon *Hansard*. I am going to be guided by our *Hansard* reporters, on whose integrity we all rely and who write down what they hear."

● Tax inspectors do not always demand money with menaces. Trevor Boucher, Australia's Commissioner for Taxation, has just sent a 100th birthday telegram to Leslie Muir of Canberra congratulating him on joining the select group of centenarian taxpayers. "Your contribution to the revenue in over 75 years of diligent tax payment is greatly appreciated. My staff join me in the fond hope that many years of life and taxes lie ahead of you."

Settling old scores

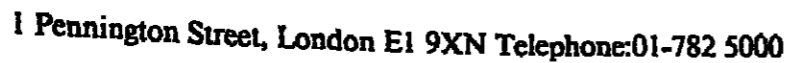
With today's local elections almost certain to lead to a further decline in SDP fortunes, David Owen is about to suffer another blow with the news that Lord Jenkins of Hillhead, one of the original Gang of Four, is writing his memoirs. The book will go on sale in the summer of 1991 in the run-up to the next general election, which is likely to bury forever the heady dreams of the early 1980s of an end to the two-party system. It is an open secret that Jenkins holds Owen largely responsible for the destruc-

tion of the dream, and a sizeable chunk of the book will be devoted to the collapse of the Alliance. Six publishers are bidding for the work: Michael Joseph, who published Denis Healey's memoirs last year, is favourite to sign up the former Labour chancellor for a six-figure sum. Jenkins says he has so far written 200,000 words and has only reached 1976, when he quit Parliament to become president of the European Commission. Was he saving the best bit for last? "I would not necessarily agree with that," he replied in suitably double-edged fashion.

Play for today

Vaclav Havel, playwright and president of Czechoslovakia, will walk into a London next month to see a West End production of his *Templation*, an attack on the now toppled communist regime. The play, which he wrote while imprisoned, has been transposed to a contemporary English setting by director James Roose-Evans for its first London production at the Westminster Theatre in June. Justifying his parallel between the rule of Mrs Thatcher and that of Gustav Husak, Roose-Evans says: "There's a danger of individual liberties being encroached upon when you elect a government with an overwhelming majority." Tory MP Terry Dicks, always ready with a quote on such occasions, finds the comparison with a communist regime "extreme, far-fetched and laughable". Havel seems certain to come under pressure from the right in Britain to disown the production.

سند من الاصل



LOCAL DEMOCRACY

David Robinson reviews the latest cinema releases: *Sweetie*, *Internal Affairs*, *See You in the Morning* and *Nuns on the Run*

Mixed bag, with a dusting of sugar

Jane Campion's first feature film, *Sweetie* (15, Chelsea Cinema, Camden Plaza), is the dark side of *Neighbours*: an absurdist tragedy of family life in Sydney working-class suburbia. Her characters are outwardly ordinary people who are quite incapable of rational relationships with one another.

Kay (Karen Colston), although she seems the sanest, has a neurotic terror of trees (which in the outcome proves to be justified) and a slavish obedience to the divinations of the tea leaves. She lives in a drab, untidy house with a drab, untidy backyard undefined by trees or any other greenery, and has stopped having sex with her docile boyfriend.

Their quiet lives are disrupted by the arrival of sister Dawn, known as *Sweetie* (Genevieve Lemon), accompanied by her spaced-out but sexually energetic junkie boyfriend. Dawn is seriously retarded, an overweight woman who still behaves like a vicious, spoilt child. The family circle is completed by Dad, still doting in some bizarre incestuous nostalgia, on *Sweetie*, and Mum, who has gone on walkabout into the wilderness after years of marital boredom.

Jane Campion is 35 and made her name with a handful of short films which, like *Sweetie*, probe the strange, tormented inner worlds of seemingly ordinary people. (A selection of these earlier works can currently be seen at the ICA in a season called "Wizards from Oz".)

She has an ability to juxtapose the comic and the awful, in exposing the horrors of family life. At the same moment we find ourselves laughing with *Sweetie* and at her; we are exasperated by her messy madness, yet equally appalled by the callousness and lack of understanding with which the others treat her.

Genevieve Lemon's *Sweetie*, by turns grotesque, demonic, comic, pitiable, is one of a whole finely calculated ensemble of performances by actors new to the screen — notably Karen Colston's perpetually anxious Kay, Tom Lyons as her daff, sweet, imperturbable boyfriend, and Jon Darling and Dorothy Barry as the

ultimate suburban parents. Jane Campion's eye for the bizarre is most notably evident in the impromptu dance at the jackaroo camp, and the catastrophic denouement — a spectacle of human helplessness.

Whether you like it or not (its premiere at Cannes last year turned into a contest between catcalls and cheers), *Sweetie* is a film unlike the rest — as distinctively offbeat as a work by Jim Jarmusch.

The old cops-and-robbers film has been superseded by cops-and-cops, now that police corruption runs neck and neck with drugs as a staple thriller theme. *Internal Affairs* (18, Plaza 1) pits an officer of the Los Angeles Police Internal Affairs Department against a reptilian bent cop, who runs rackets on a massive scale and has a genius for psychological manipulation of his adversaries — including the investigator himself.

The English director, Mike Figgis, directing his first Hollywood film, gives pace, tension and (thanks to John A. Alonzo's virtuoso camerawork) atmosphere to an essentially conventional plot. The central performances, too, are compelling enough to hide inconsistencies in their characters and behaviour (the *Internal Affairs* man veers capriciously between tough professionalism and neurotic breakdown).

Richard Gere (interviewed below) reverts to the kind of unsympathetic role which he began his career. As the bent cop, he skillfully implies the deep pathological disorders underlying the killer cop's crimes, his dare-devility and his compulsive sexuality. Cuban-born Andy Garcia manages to give charisma and conviction to his less promising part. As his partner in investigation, Laurie Metcalfe's sordid and sexually ambivalent policewoman is an original characterization.

Written and directed by Alan J. Pakula and looking very much like autobiography, *See You in the Morning* (12, Warner West End) relates the traumas of affluent New Yorkers experiencing divorce and remarriage. Having



An eye for the bizarre: Genevieve Lemon, in the strange, tormented inner world of *Sweetie*, is grotesque, demonic, comic and pitiable

gone through the collapse of what seemed like an ideal, two-child marriage, a successful psychiatrist (Jeff Bridges) marries a widow with two children and a terrible load of guilt about her recently dead husband.

Hearts are worn prominently on sleeves, as the film painstakingly — not to say ponderously — works through the problems of each of the characters involved (three parents, four children and a dog). Supplementary episodes take us painfully through the deaths of the second wife's husband and the first wife's mother.

Considering that the main

character is a psychiatrist, that everyone is deeply concerned to seem civil, civilized and sophisticated, and that they all talk such a lot, they really ought to handle their problems more expeditiously. The comfort is that we are accompanied on this marital odyssey by such likeable people as the amiable Bridges, Farrah Fawcett, former Royal Shakespeare Company actress Alice Krige; and two interesting teenagers — Drew Barrymore, the little girl from *E.T.*, and Lukas Heller, the mouse-like boy from *Witness*.

There's no joke like an old joke; and *Nuns on the Run* (12, Odcon

Haymarket) runs resolutely through the whole repertoire of drag pags. The story is very similar to *Some Like It Hot*. Pursued by Docklands Mafia and the Triads, petty gangsters Robbie Coltrane and Eric Idle seek sanctuary in a convent, disguised as nuns.

Written and directed by Jonathan Lynn, the film does not aim at subtlety. Here, predictably, are all the old gags about false bosoms and nubile convent pupils in the showers. The film shares with most contemporary, post-television comedy the fault of unrestrained gaudiness; and the script never manages to integrate the

likeable Camille Coduri (in the Marilyn Monroe part, as a myopic psychology student) into the story.

The fun in the film lies mainly in the performances, and particularly the effect upon our heroes of taking the veil. While skirts make *Idle* skittish and coy, Coltrane finds his Catholic upbringing catching up on him, and enters seriously into the part, even struggling gamely to expound the Trinity ("It's a bit of a bugger, really") to his friend. The worldly, ill-tempered nuns have Janet Suzman as their Mother Superior and enduring octogenarian Doris Hare as the forgetful oldest inhabitant.

VIDEO BOX

Geoff Brown

A weekly selection of films recently released on video. The year refers to the date of first release, or in the case of television films, of first broadcast.

AGE OF CONSENT (RCA/Columbia, 15): Michael Powell's last major production, about an artist (James Mason) bewitched by a teenager (Helen Mirren) on the Great Barrier Reef. A fascinating film of serious intent and smouldering eroticism. 1969.

DEAD CALM (Warner, 15): Maritime Australian thriller, with Sam Neill and Nicole Kidman as a yachting couple trying to flee from a deranged killer on the open seas. Glossily packaged, with the odd eerie moment, but hollow inside. Director, Phillip Noyce. 1989.

FRANTIC (Warner, 15): Harrison Ford as a doctor desperately searching for his kidnapped wife in Paris. Beguiling, if unambitious Hitchcock-esque thriller from Roman Polanski. 1988.

THE HIRELING (RCA/Columbia, PG): British cinema on its best behaviour, adapted from L.P. Hartley's novel about a widow and her chauffeur knocking against social barriers. Fine performances (Sarah Miles, Robert Shaw), but with all the thrill of lukewarm tea. 1973.

LICENCE TO KILL (Warner, 15): Fair addition to the James Bond cycle, with Timothy Dalton's Bond on a mission of vengeance in Latin America. Dynamic action scenes; juicy villainy from Robert Davi as a drugs baron. 1989.

STAR TREK V — THE FINAL FRONTIER (Palace, PG): Tepid outing for the Starship Enterprise, in search of the Meaning of Life. Jaded special effects; flaccid direction by Captain Kirk himself, alias William Shatner. 1989.

SUMMER OF '42 (Warner, 15): An adolescent (Gary Coleman) develops a summertime crush for a war bride (Jennifer O'Neill). No depths are plumbed, but the period flavour and sympathetic handling leave a pleasant taste. Director, Robert Mulligan. 1971.

TOM MORRIS (Warner, 15): Steve McCauley in his penultimate film, as a maverick cowboy who outlived his time. Beautiful to behold photographically, though production upheavals severely upset the film's equilibrium. 1980.

WHEN HARRY MET SALLY (Palace, 15): Two Manhattanites (Billy Crystal, a mile too old for the role, and the sparkling Meg Ryan) enjoy an on-and-off romance. Reasonable attempt to update the Thirties-style Hollywood comedy, although the originals were funnier (and shorter). 1989.

Carefully playing the system

Two new films put Richard Gere back on to the A-lists, says Simon Banner

Contrary to recent reports in the tabloid press along the lines of "Heart-throb star to quit movies", Richard Gere, whose films include *American Gigolo* and *An Officer and a Gentleman*, is not giving up his acting career in order to become "a full-time Buddhist".

Since he met the Dalai Lama eight years ago in Nepal, Gere's somewhat improbable but deeply-felt involvement with Buddhism has steadily increased; at home in New York he is founding chairman of Tibet House, a cultural and educational centre which also raises money for Tibetan refugees. But Gere, who has just turned 40 and now has grey hair, still takes acting assignments and appears in two new films being released almost simultaneously.

The first is a bloody thriller called *Internal Affairs* (see review, above), directed by a Briton, Mike Figgis, on his first outing in Hollywood. Gere has played dislikable characters before — "There's a trick I can do," he says, "which is to take negative characters and make them palatable" — but none as apparently irredeemable as the crooked cop he plays in *Internal Affairs*. He says that when he first read the script he finished by throwing it across the room "because it was about such disgusting people".

The Dalai Lama apparently once asked Gere if it is true that when a character in a film is angry, the actor too is angry. He laughed very hard when Gere told him that yes, this was one approach. The lesson for Gere seems to have been to avoid letting his roles spill over into his life. "That saves me a lot of grief," he says. Yet he was so carried away shooting one scene in *Internal Affairs* that he ended up in hospital with severe cuts. That

particular take is not in the finished film, because the camera was out of focus.

By contrast to *Internal Affairs*, the other film, a shamelessly old-fashioned and surprisingly enjoyable romantic comedy entitled *Pretty Woman* (released in Britain next week), appears to have involved him in nothing more demanding than frequent changes of his fashion suits and ties. Yet it is *Pretty Woman*, a sort of *My Fair Lady* for the Nineties, that has given Gere the hit he has so evidently needed in the last few years: the film took close to \$30 million in its first 10 days of release in the United States.

Since 1982 and the success of *An Officer and a Gentleman*, none of Gere's films has succeeded at the box office. Some, like Coppola's *The Cotton Club* and Sidney Lumet's *Power*, have been almost-noble failures. Others, such as the ill-fated, not to say ridiculous, Biblical epic *King David*, have been notorious embarrassments and have only hardened Gere's image as a pretty-boy actor out of his depth as soon as he leaves the bedroom. "No male star since Rin Tin Tin has spent more time on screen minus clothes," one reviewer acidly observed.

Beyond making him a con-

tempter for those straightforwardly charming, Cary Grant-type roles that Hollywood finds so hard to fill, *Pretty Woman* will not change anyone's mind about Richard Gere, but it will at least ensure that the top studios' casting directors restore him to their A-lists. Gere himself admits to having had a sense that his credit was running out with Hollywood in the last few years: "It became time to take care of my career again," he says.

His own long-cherished projects include a film he plans to produce and star in, called *Imagining Argentina*, scripted by Christopher Hampton; and a big-screen adaptation of Martin Sherman's *Bent*, a play Gere first appeared in on Broadway 10 years ago. He would also like to do *Coriolanus* on stage. Gere expresses distaste for most of what Hollywood produces — he turned down *Die Hard*, for example, because of its extreme violence, and he rails against "the untimely clichés" of last year's comedy hit, *Working Girl*. *Pretty Woman*, he says, has at least "no pretence about being sociological". But he will continue to work within the system.

Gere says that an attempt to change Hollywood and capitalist movie-making would be useless: "You can't expect an apple to be a banana, can you?" he asks, and smiles an inscrutable smile.



Gere: An irredeemably crooked cop in *Internal Affairs*

Pick of the proms

Richard Morrison chooses the potential highlights of this summer's season

There is always a certain frisson, bordering on genteel hysteria, on the day when the BBC unveils its new season of Henry Wood Promenade Concerts. The traditionalists turn furiously to the end first to check that British music's hallowed "dream ticket" (Elgar/Wood/Arne/Parr) is safely in place on the Last Night. It is. Then they tot up the number of Beethoven and Brahms symphonies (a bulky 10 this year), scour the pages of the Prospectus for the Viennese Night (August 27), and lament the uprooting — for the second year running — of Beethoven's Choral Symphony from the penultimate night.

Chauvinists deplore the presence of Poulenc when there is no Purcell. Modernists bawl "what no Stockhausen?", early-music devotees search anxiously for appearances by the reigning gurus: Norrington, Pinnock, Eliot Gardiner. Finally, about 15,000 British composers raise a simultaneous shout of "fix" because they are not among the half-dozen given a Proms commission by the BBC.

This year, the season (July 20 to September 15, Albert Hall) has a notably non-experimental look, especially in comparison with the weird and wonderful Proms of 20 years ago. Where are the concerts of electronically-synthesized whale calls juxtaposed with 12th-century liturgical dance-dramas? John Drummond, Controller of Radio 3, might argue that it was precisely because last year's season avoided such esoteric pockets that it achieved a remarkable 85 per cent average attendance. Perhaps he also has his eye on wooing the commercial sponsors who are going to help finance the Proms in the years to come.

Nevertheless, the season covers an enormous range of styles and repertoires, and the cost of a standing season-ticket for all 66 concerts (£95 arena, £70 gallery) is still less than that of a single top-price stalls ticket at Covent Garden. Since the season contains no fewer than six complete operas, that is an interesting comparison. With its spectacle of thousands of youngsters standing motionless and transfixed by sound, the Proms remains the greatest advertisement for classical music. Here is a subjective selection of 10 potential superlatives:

Most divisive interpretation: Mozart opera lovers brought up on Böhm and Karajan may loathe Roger Norrington's approach to *The Magic Flute* (August 25). For the rest: high-speed revelation. Jolliest Prom: Bank Holiday luncheon (August 27) in Kensington Gardens, when the London All-Stars Steelband is borrowed from the adjacent Notting Hill Carnival.

Most sedate: Same day, two hours later, the vast cubic capacity of the Albert Hall will tingle with chamber music from just three players:



Cleo Laine: The "Voice of God" in *Noyes Fludde*

the Beaux Arts Trio. However, as Churchill might have observed: some players, some music.

Cheekiest literary allusion: "Bonfires of Vanities" (August 20) turns out to be nothing to do with Manhattan Angst, but much to do with Medici weddings in the 16th century. Philip Pickett's fine New London Consort derives its programme title from the amusing medieval practice of burning those works of art deemed blasphemous, and sometimes the artists too. The world has changed little.

Wonderkind of the season: Russian pianist Evgeny Kissin plays Tchaikovsky's First Concerto (July 27). When this teenager performed the piece with the late Herbert von Karajan in Salzburg, the maestro was so entranced by the playing that he forgot to cue the flute's entry after the cadenza: rather a crucial error.

Most nostalgic evocation of the Sixties: Tippett's opera *The Ice Break* (July 23) was written in the early Seventies, but its general hypothesis — that love can solve global problems, and its touchingly surreal use of slang (the chick is cool, man) places it firmly in the flower-power era.

Most intriguing title: Mark-Anthony Turnage's recent orchestral piece is called *Three Screaming Popes* (July 31). As Simon Rattle, who conducts it, once memorably remarked: "not a work to tour Italy with".

Biggest jolt to the purists: A Russian performing Elgar's Cello Concerto, and on the violin? Lionel Tertis's transcription is expert; Yuri Bashmet is a superb player; dihard Elgarians need not fear (August 9).

Best lesson in precision: The Cleveland Orchestra (September 5, 6) is the ultimate exemplar of clipped, exact music-making: a marvellous tonic for two concerts, even if a whole season with it might prove exhausting. Wildest castings: Husky jazz chanteuse Cleo Laine as the "Voice of God" in Britten's *Noyes Fludde* (September 9).

Romantic rhymes

CONCERT
Noël Goodwin
Szymanowski Songs
Purcell Room

PIANIST Iain Burnside hit upon a pretty conceit with which to end his short series of Szymanowski song programmes in the South Bank's celebration of "Poland's Last Romantic": children's songs.

In a selection from the composer's *Children's Rhymes* of 1923, characteristics of Polish folk song were adorned with a veneer of harmonic sophistication in settings of nursery and nonsense verse.

They were ingeniously interspersed with corresponding songs by Stravinsky and the younger Witold Lutoslawski, and each shift of musical identity imparted a continuing freshness to the ditties. Stravinsky's setting of *The Owl* and the *Pussy-Cat* could have been more colourfully verbalized, but otherwise the Slav tradition of

imaginative children's music was divertingly honoured.

The songs were split between the soprano Jennifer Smith and the tenor Jamie MacDougall. Both had taken trouble with detail as well as character in singing original Polish and Russian texts. The tenor brought a caressing warmth to his selection, but the soprano's admirable musical intentions were impeded by an inadequate technique of *mezza voce* to sustain some softer phrases.

This, to some extent, affected her otherwise accomplished account of the remarkable and difficult *Four Tugare Songs*, Op 41, in which Szymanowski came closest to an expressionist idiom reminiscent of early Schoenberg. The piano playing here was expert, following the subtle shading of romantic contour in the Polish composer's treatment of German poets. These were directly compared with Strauss and the earliest Berg, their distinctively personal emotional character contrasted with Szymanowski's curiously anonymous equivalent.



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sweetie

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Middle-ageing middle England

Perhaps any relationship is a struggle, requiring the sort of daily diligence that is seldom successfully celebrated in fiction. Stanley Middleton's pace suggests this. He is a connoisseur of the mundane: describing a group of lonely people somewhere in the middle of England, preoccupied with the practicalities of the day and the minutiae of social interaction. The timing of morning coffee or the slipperiness of the roads become talking points of importance. So does the question of how one answers the telephone, greets a visitor, or responds to an invitation. All available conventions need to be explored before they are either rejected or selected, so a proposal of marriage is not very much more demanding than an invitation to tea. *Changes and Chances* is basically a study of middle age as it is lived by a single man in a large house, a widowed schoolteacher, a supermarket manager and his wife. Later they are joined by an elderly poet, who enjoys their company enough to talk to them about his aspirations and the meaning of his work — conversations in which Middleton shows his greatest skill. Only one character, a boy in his early teens, stands outside this elderly group. He provides a measurement of the flatness of their expectations and, despite Middleton's care, the dullness of their world.

In Jeremy Cooper's *Us* the struggle is more hectic. Alastair and Dinah have presented to the public eye a marriage that seems to be perfect — harmonious, elegant, and successful. For them "us-ness" is a real concept readily embraced as a life work. So when it begins to crack, the sound of its crumbling reverberates through

Anne Barnes on a middling Mr Middleton, the us-ness of a jolly perfect marriage, and some nasty mini horrors

CHANGES AND CHANCES

By Stanley Middleton
Hutchinson, £12.95

US

By Jeremy Cooper
Hutchinson, £12.95

FLAMINGOES IN ORBIT

By Philip Ridley
Hamish Hamilton, £12.99

BOMBAY DUCK

By Farrukh Dhondy
Cape, £13.95

the whole of Alastair's past life. He must fumble his way back through all the relationships he has ever had to find the root of this emotional unease. It is a complicated comment on the debilitating nature of the expectations set up by love and marriage. The trouble is that the whole situation is described with great seriousness from inside Alastair's head. The reader knows by about the second page exactly why love and women don't quite work out for him, and it is a frustrating experience to

plough through his increasingly lumpy utterances on his journey to self-knowledge without humour.

In contrast, Philip Ridley's stories in *Flamingoes in Orbit* compel attention because so much is left for the reader to fill in. Much of the nastiness of what happens in these mini horror tales is rooted in simple childhood scenes. Two small boys collect pictures of atrocities in Vietnam and gloat over them in secret. Others show greedy delight in spearing a dolphin with pitchforks. Menace lurks in the shady corners of family life even in the seaside holiday or the buying of a pram — and leaps out from childhood to destroy the adult. There is a similarity in the themes of the stories which makes them seem like fragments of a novel. The same personality is sketched in different guises. And if these are sketches, the novel when it comes, will be chilling.

Farrukh Dhondy also works in sketches, but here he has knitted them into a sprawling novel. In *Bombay Duck* he wants to explain what it is like to be an Asian in London and a Londoner in Asia. Acting as a sort of inter-cultural voyeur, he displays the lives of actors, journalists, shopkeepers, girls about town, and others from a variety of classes and countries. The story begins with a Caribbean actor taking part in a slanged up version of *Antony and Cleopatra* at the Edinburgh fringe. A perfect set-up for cross-cultural reference. The same man then assumes an Indian stage-name and departs to act out scenes from the *Ramayan* in the capitals of the subcontinent. An acquaintance then takes up the narration — a shadowy figure, both scholar and supply teacher, who

FICTION



Stanley Middleton, a serious man, and the poet of provincial life

smuggles babies out of India for adoption in Earls Court. These two central figures, striding confidently from west to east and back again, enable Dhondy to dwell on issues of culture and racism at whatever level catches his fancy. He raises the issue of Salman

Rushdie (indirectly through a similar situation), or the racism in London schools, or the reason for fish being called Bombay Duck with apparently equal relish. It's not profound thought or clever narrative structure that he's after. For him the parade is the thing.

A blockbuster of laughs and giggles

Anthony Quinton

THE OXFORD BOOK OF HUMOROUS PROSE
Edited by Frank Muir
Oxford, £17.95

In September 1538 Thomas Cromwell, on behalf of King Henry VIII, directed that a copy of the Great Bible should be set up in every church in the country. Apart from anything else, the Great Bible was a physically substantial object, so it may be that the manufacture of lecterns took a quantum leap at that moment. Prospective readers of *The Oxford Book of Humorous Prose* should try to get hold of one if they are to avoid developing unsightly trenches on the top of their thighs and trousers. It has 1,162 pages: this is not a typographical mistake. The *OUP* should have supplied a lectern erector set with each copy, along the same lines as the magnifying apparatus handed out with the compact edition of the *OED*.

There is every reason for there to be anthologies of humorous writing. Very few writers of this class of material can keep going for the length of a whole book, although short items of great merit are within their powers. Another reason for this kind of collection is

Gubbins's first name was Norman, but the Gubbins his own. The best book of this kind I know is the *Sub-Treasury of American Humour*, put together by E. B. and Katherine White. It is arranged thematically, where the Muir collection is roughly chronological. The latter is preferable: it shows development, and invites appropriate indulgence, in a way the other does not. P. G. Wodehouse's *A Century of Humour* is a flat affair, arranged on no very evident principle.

An important virtue of Muir's book is that he has not been afraid to give suitably qualified humorists plenty of space. Dickens has 25 pages; Mark Twain 18; Wodehouse, rightly *victor ludorum*, 50. Mark Twain comes, unfortunately for him, after 50 pages of lesser Americans, from Seba Smith to Joel Chandler Harris, who rely on elaborate misspellings to convey dialect humour of a pretty woful order. There is some fine American material in the book apart from Twain: Perelman (25 pp) and Thurber (15 pp), while Canada has Stephen Leacock, weighing in at 10 pages. As an equal-opportunity anthology, Muir has felt constrained to give enormous representation to Australia and New Zealand, but not in a way to create a lasting appetite for it.

For a long time it seemed that Frank Muir had adopted a self-denying ordinance excluding parody. This Beerbohm is in with only a pleasant but daintily pallid essay, and with nothing whatever from the sublime *Christmas Carol* of E. B. White is there with a brief, good piece about Isadora Duncan's brother Raymond and an essay-type essay on the Model T, which Muir rightly describes as "a characteristic example of White's sly and almost imperceptible humour". The glorious parody of Hemingway — "Across the Street and into the Grill" — is too perceptible to leave out. Oliver Jensen's version of the Gettysburg address in the language of Eisenhower is not to be found. While we are on Americans: where is Woody Allen?

The collection begins with Caston, items from "Jest Books", and a sermon-reliever from Latimer, the Oxford martyr. One ancient joke (1697) has quite an up-to-date Henry Youngman quality: a melting Sermon being preached in a Country Church, all fell a-weeping, except a Country Man, who being asked why he did not weep with the rest? "Because," says he, "I am not of this Parish!"

There is a good deal of *Punch*, but a curious shortage of material from the greatest age of British humour, roughly 1880 to 1914. Humorous verse is sometimes light. This collection is on the light side, like Randolph Sutton, an entertainer billed in my early life as "Britain's premier light comedian". At one and a half pence a page it is remarkable value for money.



GLYNIS BOYD HARTE

that humorous writing is ideal for short periods of waiting, and may provide some quick relief at times of general despondency.

The reviewing of all anthologies inevitably involves, indeed may almost wholly consist of, complaints about what has been left out, and about much of what has been put in. Where an anthology of any size is under consideration, the advice is certain to be given that it should not be read straight through, but should be dipped into from time to time. I should like to say that reading straight through can be done, and with enjoyment. Like life itself, it has its ups and downs, but as the end draws near, the thought is not necessarily uppermost that how good it is it will soon be over.

Frank Muir's description of his role as tour-conductor rather than editor is entirely justified. Editors are allowed introductions and footnotes, and otherwise keep themselves to themselves. Frank Muir precedes such selection with a passage of italicized comment. These are helpful and informative. I was glad to learn that Nathaniel

Of kerns and gallowglasses well supplied

CRIME

Marcel Berlins

GALLOWGLASS
By Barbara Vine
Viking, £13.99

I have never been convinced that it was either necessary or desirable for Ruth Rendell to allow some of her books to be written by Barbara Vine. The use of a second literary identity, while making no effort to disguise its provenance, deliberately courted the reader to have differential expectations of the two writers. It worked at first. Vine's introspective, moodily claustrophobic *A Fatal Inversion*, for instance, was a different animal from the harsh, shocking, psychopathic thrillers that Rendell was then writing. Gallowglass blurs the distinctions and, I believe, makes nonsense of retaining the two identities. It would not matter much if it were not also a disappointing work, though only in comparison with Rendell-Vine's own lofty standards.

Joe, its principal narrator, is a miserable, depressive reject in emotional, though not sexual, thrill to the sophisticated, rootless Sandro, who has stopped him from suicide. He becomes Sandro's gallowglass — chief's servant — his unquestioning hero-worship of the older man exploited for some initially unclear criminal enterprise. Sandro himself seems obsessed by the story of a past kidnapping in Italy; and in a Suffolk country estate surrounded by security devices, a beautiful young woman lives with her ageing husband and protective chauffeur. The Joe-Sandro relationship is wonderfully achieved, and Suffolk has never seemed so sinister; but there is a predictability about the main plot that is not quite compensated for by the precision and subtlety of the writing.

Don't Leave Me This Way, by Joan Smith (Faber, £12.99). Feisty Eng. Lit. academic Loreta Lawson reluctantly harbours a women's group acquaintance over Christmas. The unwelcome house guest disappears on New Year's Eve, leaving a surprise in her luggage, and a trail pointing in unexpected and dangerous directions, which the guilt-ridden Lawson follows stubbornly. Thoughtful, humorous, vulnerable, full of real doubts and emotions, Loreta Lawson is one of the most fully-realized characters in crime fiction; and her milieu is thoroughly convincing. Terrific.

A February Morning, by Hannah Wakefield (The Women's Press, £4.95). Another spunky feminist heroine, Dee Street, a solicitor in an all-women's firm, is drawn into the killing of a Greenham-Common-type peace activist. A lesbian client in a messy child custody court action is prime suspect, and it all becomes linked to a forthcoming IRA trial. Dee's efforts to clear her client are complicated by her own problems, not least that she may be pregnant shortly after giving her lover the push. The plot is a little stretched, but the characters act and talk believably, and the American-born Street is an unusually interesting lawyer.

The Dying of the Light, by Robert Richardson (Gollancz, £12.95). Ageing sculptress, member of the once-famous Portenian school of artists, crushed by her own partly-completed creation, her death curiously tied to the unexplained disappearance at sea nearly 40 years before of a fellow artist. Querulous survivors of the movement, grimly lingering on past glories, hold the secret, stylishly exposed by Augustus Maltrevers, in Cornwall to see his lady friend perform in theatre-by-the-cove. Sharp, witty, and a sure feel for brooding Cornish menace.

The Raphael Affair, by Iain Pears (Gollancz, £12.95). The writer is a real-life serious art historian, applying his expertise to an enthusiastic crime debut. Italian art thief squad chief Bottando, and his sidekick Flavia, confront a young English academic claiming that a cheap Manini recently stolen from an obscure Roman church masks a Raphael. It turns up with an English art dealer of questionable integrity, and its subsequent vicissitudes provoke violence and murder. A little less detailed art-histo data — no doubt interesting but not always plot-relevant — impedes the flow a little; but this is an impressive first, promising much.

A Tasty Way To Die, by Janet Laurence (Macmillan, £10.95). Claire, part-owner of the chic Wooden Spoon cooking and catering company, eats a fatal mushroom, possibly meant for her partner Eve. Exuberant tale of gastronomic homicide, full of intriguing inside-knowledge info on mass feeding. Engaging chetette, Davina Lisle, sleuths zestfully and there are even some helpful culinary hints along the way.

Rough Treatment, by John Harvey (Viking, £12.99). Shambling, overweight, and emotionally damaged, Inspector Charlie Resnick looks deeper into inconsistencies in a victim's story of house robbery in Nottingham suburbia, and uncovers an interlocking tale of missing cocaine, professional jealousies among second-rate television people, and adulterous passions. Jazz-loving Resnick is an original, his police colleagues unostentatious; and Nottingham is surprisingly effective as a mean-streeted location for the wicked. A second novel more than satisfying the hopes raised by his starter.

Murder, I Presume, by Gillian Lindsay (Macmillan, £10.95). Dodgy Victorian explorer, struck dead by poisoned dart when about to reveal nasties about a fellow traveller's behaviour on a source-of-the-Nile expedition. Possible perpetrators include wives of rival explorers with competing theories. Well researched, good period feel, and a clever solution.

This is the eleventh novel by Anne Tyler, Pulitzer-prize-winning author of *The Accidental Tourist*. Maggie and Ira are in their late forties. As a couple they are not perfect, but are nevertheless united in bearing the cross of missed opportunity. Both from Baltimore's class of '36, he, tall, taciturn, and part Red Indian, really wanted to be a doctor but stuck around his father's frame shop to look after his inadequate family instead; she, small and plump, took a summer job at the Silver Threads Nursing Home and never left it.

"Mom? Was there a certain conscious point in your life when you decided to settle for being ordinary?" asks their daughter. The author answers the 31-dollar question by moulding the routine of this long, row-filled, loving marriage into generous philosophy.

Going to the funeral of an old schoolmate's husband and sitting through a mawkishly resurrected film of the bereaved friend's wedding, bring vital moments in Maggie's past rushing back to justify her present condition; Ira, as usual, is sitting in another room playing cards with himself. The brief sensual drama that follows is Anne Tyler at her most moving. The finely ploughed memories recall Raymond Carver in their

Mating à la modern modes

PAPERBACKS

Tania Glyde

BREATHING LESSONS
by Anne Tyler
Pan, £3.99

imploping detail; the sheer power of this book is immensely comforting.

Where Anne Tyler makes minute household detail into a compelling record of humanity, Clare Harkness is not so successful. In *Time of Grace* (Black Swan, £4.99), two young girls meet at smart convent school, and become firm friends. Together they traverse the Sixties and Seventies,

meeting, mating, and marrying ever more impossibly unsuitable men.

As they trot towards middle age and book's end, the author suddenly throws in the suicide of one awful husband, the death of the other, the wedding-night heart attack of his ageing replacement, and the women's final glorious realization that they are in fact lesbians, whereupon they happily set up house together in Italy with their two beleaguered sets of children.

The story is told mainly in dialogue, often consisting of strangely inane and lengthy telephone arrangements. The men are an outrageously composite gang of violent and duplicitous bastards, while the women, still dangling from their unconventional family backgrounds, trail through life with a curious lack of self-determination. This book is about twice as long as it should be. Harkness has a talent for witty stereotyping, but here it is so submerged as to be almost unquotable.

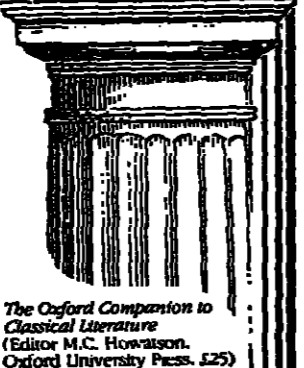
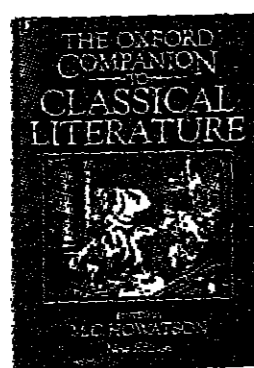
Green is fourth in the Storia paperback series of short fiction by women born since 1945. Invited to interpret the word in all its forms, most of these writers have chosen the disruption of nature, aka the status quo, as their theme. The best pieces in this very strong collection also contain an element of surprise. Mary Flanagan and Carole Hayman stab the second-home idyll right in the heart. Flanagan especially with her deceptively gentle run-up. Patricia Eakins offers a unique view of the world that hovers deliberately between politics and proverb. Sue Townsend fights to put idealism before rotten truth, and the Egyptian writer Salwa Bakr writes on the scourge of individuality. Helen Slavín fans our irritation with an excellent account of courtroom sexism. Despite the highly topical nature of the subject, these writers wave few axes without first ensuring that they have metaphysical and literary space in which to grind them.

Sara Maitland, biographer of Vesta Tilley and contributor to *Green*, seems at first to be no more than playing in the tide of female awareness, wallowing in lurid depths of feeling or simply taking cover behind bitter private truths. But the raw lack of self-consciousness of *A Book of Spells* (Minerva, £4.50) is quite influential. Every story, monologue, and reinterpretation gets its energy from a true gut reaction to life. The best example is "The Flower Garden", the story of a young, plain adolescent who feels so ugly that she plants flower seeds in her vagina. Equally arresting is the "Tale of the Valiant Demoiselle", based on the historical account of a 16th-century female castaway.

Violence and terror flow in smaller type, below the anodyne version of the story as told to a small girl too young to need to know about resilience. The cry throughout is gender-pain, the injustice endemic to female existence, transformed by the author's unusual ability to translate millennial preoccupations into singular fables.

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T M O S **WRITERS NEWS**

TELEVISION & RADIO

BBC 1

6.00 *Caelex*
6.30 *BBC Breakfast News* with Laurie Mayer and Fiona Foster. Includes a review of the morning newspapers by Philippa Kennedy. **8.55** *Regional News* and weather.
9.00 *News and weather* followed by *Open Air*.
9.20 *Gloria Live*. Magazine show presented by Gloria Hunniford.
10.00 *News and weather* followed by *Matchpoint* (r).
10.25 *Children's BBC* begins with *Playdays* which comes from Tiptoe in Essex (r). **10.50** *Bunyip* (r). **11.05** *Five to Eleven*. Patricia Routledge with more readings from *Julian of Norwich*.
11.00 *News and weather* followed by *Open Air*.
12.00 *News and weather* followed by *Daytime Live*. Anna Massey continues her exploration of the locations that inspired the Brontë sisters. Plus a song from Paul Young. **12.55** *Regional News* and weather.
1.00 *One O'Clock News* with Philip Hayton. Weather.
1.30 *Neighbours*. (Caelex). **1.50** *Matchpoint*. General knowledge quiz.
2.15 *Film: Buddies* (1988). Lively comedy thriller from Australia featuring Colin Firth and David Hopkins as two hardworking cops whose lives are heading off the attempt by a big company to grab their claim. Worthy first effort by director Arch Nicholson.

BBC 2

6.45 *Open University: England is the Place for Me*. Ends at 7.10.
8.00 *News 8.15 Westminster*.
9.00 *The Way That I Went*. Hector MacDonnell leaves his ancestral home at Dunrobin Castle and heads for Glasgow (r).
9.25 *Daytime on Two* includes *10.00 Look, Stranger* which visits a factory in Durham famous for building organs. **11.00** *A Victorian Childhood*. **11.20** *The Discovery of Ighite* in Northern Ireland and **1.40** *A Musical Version of The Emperor and the Nightingale*.
2.00 *News and weather* followed by *Watch*.
2.15 *Country File* (r) **2.40** *In the Garden* (r).
3.00 *News and weather* followed by *Westminster Live* 3.50 *News*, regional news and weather.
4.00 *Junior Darts*. The British Youth Darts championship quarter-finals.
4.30 *Top Gear* (r) **5.00** *Snail*. How to get the best photos at children's parties (r). (Caelex). **5.10** *Horizon*: The Intelligent Island (r). (Caelex).
6.00 *Film: Where the River Bends* (1992). Compelling Western, set in 1940s Oregon, with James Stewart as an outlaw-turned-wagon train guide in conflict with his former partner (Arthur Kennedy) who is making a quick profit selling their supplies to prospectors. One of several fine films which Stewart made in the 1940s with the director, Anthony Mann.
7.30 **9.15**. This last in the series examines how employers now want to link pay with performance.
8.00 *Yes, Minister*. More brilliantly penned comic clashes between politics and the civil service, as represented by Paul Eddington and Nigel Hawthorne (r). (Caelex).
8.30 *Nature*. Michael Buerk hosts the



Join the 25th birthday celebrations (8.00pm)

8.00 *Tomorrow's World's 25th Birthday*.
● With the relentless policy of its presenters, who seemed to have strayed in from *Blue Peter*, and tendency to emphasize the trivial to make digestible viewing I have to confess that this is not my favourite

show. But there is no denying its staying power and ability to draw big audiences. Without *Tomorrow's World* millions of people would be more ignorant about science. Tonight's programme, live as usual, is extended to an hour and celebrates the show's 25th anniversary with a look forward to the next 25 years in the company of television stations abroad which run science programmes in the *Tomorrow's World* mould. Brazil, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United States are among the countries providing speculation and prediction. All of them, of course, are scientifically based in theory.
9.00 *Nine O'Clock News* with Mary Lewis. Regional news and weather.
9.30 *Birds of a Feather*. Last in the repeated series of the gritty and incisive comedy about two sisters with jaded husbands. Tracey gets a fond letter from hubby Danny, only to discover that it was meant for another girl. (Caelex).
10.00 *The Richard Dimbleby Lecture*: Europe in the 90s. Helmut Schmidt, the former German Chancellor, argues for a new Nato and a political strengthening of the European Community.
10.40 *Question Time*. The guests are Dr John Cunningham MP, the Rev James Osborne, Scottish Secretary of State Malcolm Rifkind, and Sir David Steel. **11.40** *Local Elections 90*. David Dimbleby with live coverage of local election results.
3.00 *approx* Weather.

CHANNEL 4

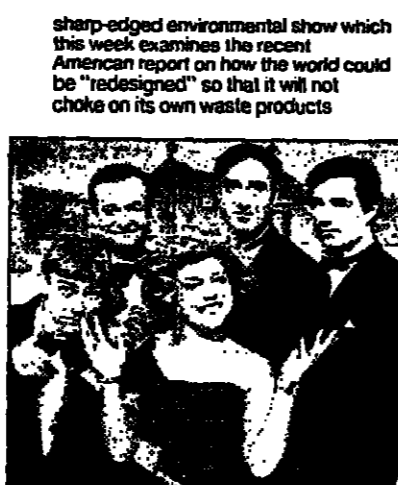
6.00 *The Art of Landscape*. Beautiful series about the landscape.
6.30 *The Channel Four Daily*.
9.25 *Schools*.
12.00 *The Parliament Programme* presented by Sue Cameron.
12.30 *Business Daily* with Susanah Simons. Financial and business news service.
1.00 *Sesame Street*. Pre-school learning series. Today's guest is Bill Crystal.
2.00 *A Full Life*. Former electronics union leader Lord Chapple looks back in conversation with Jill Cochrane (r).
2.25 *Chapman 4*. Racing from Newmarket. Bruce Scott introduces live coverage of the McCarthy Information Handicap (2.30), the Crawley Warren Pretty Polly Stakes (3.00), the General Accident 1000 Guineas Stakes (3.40) and the Madragues Handicap (4.15) race. The commentators are Graham Goodie and Faleigh Gilbert.
4.30 *Fifteen to One*. More quickfire quizzing with William G. Stewart.
5.00 *Garibaldi the General*. Or how Franco Nero in whiskers helped free Italy from foreign rule. Today, his popularity increases but the wily and jealous Cavour takes steps to stop it.
6.00 *The Painter's World*. Abstract. The struggle for acceptance by painters talking a "new language of art". Last in an interesting, if over-ambitious series. Influential painters Vesaliy Kandinsky and Jackson Pollock are seen at work and modern master Frank Stella discusses how he has continued to create his "pictorial dramas" for more than three decades.

ITV LONDON

6.00 *TV-am* begins with *News* followed by *Good Morning Britain* presented by Geoff Clark and from 7.00, by Mike Morris and Lorraine Kelly. With news at 6.30, 7.00, 7.30, 8.00, 8.30 and 9.00. After Nine includes Clare Rayner with her problem postbag.
9.25 *Cross Wits*. Quiz show hosted by Tom O'Connor. **9.55** *Thames News* and weather.
10.00 *The Time ... The Place ...* Mike Scott chairs another topical discussion presented by Richard Madeley and Judy Finnigan. Today's edition includes items on consumer affairs, child safety, restaurants, family health and the world's first ecological park on an industrial estate. With national and international news at 11.55 followed by national weather.
12.10 *The Riddlers*. For the young. **12.30** *Home and Away*.
1.00 *News at One* with John Suchet. Weather. **1.20** *Thames News* and weather.
1.30 *Somebody's Children*. The second of four programmes on adoption looks at the experiences of three adoptees searching for their roots. **2.00** *A Country Practice*.
2.30 *TV Weekly*. Anne Diamond takes her weekly look behind the scenes of ITV's programmes.
3.00 *Sounds Like Music*. Bobby Crush quizzes three more contestants on their stage and screen musical knowledge. **3.25** *Thames News* and weather. **3.30** *Sons and Daughters*.
4.00 *Huxley Pig* (r) **4.15** *The Adventures*

of Teddy Ruxpin (r) **4.40** *Enid Blyton's Castle of Adventure*. Children's adventure serial starring Susan George, Brian Blessed, Corinne Ransom and Gareth Hunt.
5.10 *Blackbustlers*. General knowledge quiz game for teenagers.
5.40 *News with Nicholas Owen*. Weather.
5.55 *Thames Help*. Jackie Sprackley with details of the Friends of the Earth organization.
6.00 *Home and Away* (r).
6.30 *Thames News* and weather.
7.00 *Emmerdale*. (Oracle).
7.30 *Sporting Triangles*. Royal jockey Willie Carson, formerly a stalwart of the nyl BBC quiz, *A Question of Sport*, joins Jimmy Greaves on tonight's programme. Swimmer Sharon Davies partners Andy Gray, while footballer David Platt teams up with Emyrh Hughes. Andy Craig fires the questions.
8.00 *The Bill*. Small Hours. Two stories for the price of one in today's episode of the superb police series. Datta and Quinn are sceptical about a Vietnamese lady's complaints of racial harassment, but then a fire bomb is put through her door. Meanwhile, Aickman and Hella stop a car with a young couple in it, whereupon the man takes off his clothes and does a streak down the road. (Oracle).
8.30 *This Week: The Millionaire* in Chains. A portrait of Adrian Khashoggi, once dubbed "the richest man in the world", as he lives the life of Riley while on bail with an on-air sentence: he is attached to his ankle, accused of racketeering and helping the Marcos family hide the wealth they allegedly stole from the Philippines government's coffers. The film shows him enjoying himself with his family

and friends as he takes his private DC9 from Florida to New York where he lives in a \$30 million apartment.
9.00 *TECK*. The plug is being pulled on the feeble detective series, which is being cut short with six episodes still to go. Next week this slot will be filled with a new helping of *L.A. Law*. (Oracle).
10.00 *News at Ten* with Sandy Gall and Julia Somerville. Weather. **10.30** *Thames News* and weather.
10.35 *The City Programme*. Is the British oil business set to boom? And into the institutional investors' guilty of too often taking the short-term view? Presented by Steve Clarke and Danielle Donougher.
11.05 *Thames News Election Special*. Andrew Gardner presents live coverage of the results from today's local elections. Eyes will be fixed particularly on Wandsworth, the borough with the lowest poll tax, but with a Conservative majority of just one seat. With Denis Tuohy and Robin Houston.
2.00am *The Twilight Zone: The Cold Equations*. A teenage stowaway on a spacecraft discovers that she has made a fatal mistake. Followed by *News headlines*.
2.30 *Stephen King's World of Horrors*. Scare-master Stephen King mixes chilling surprises with sinister wit in this exclusive tour through his own personal realm of terror.
3.30 *Backdraft* features Gary Numan in concert at the Hammermesh Odeon in October last year.
4.30 *America's Top Ten* introduced by Casey Kasem.
5.00 *ITN Morning News* with Richard Bath. Ends at 6.00.



Launched into orbit: staff of KYTV (9.00pm)

sharp-edged environmental show which this week examines the recent American report on how the world could be "redesigned" so that it will not choke on its own waste products.
9.30 *Minutes: A View from the*
● The current series ends, as it has so often preceded, in sombre mood. Regular viewers may regret that 40 Minutes seems to be becoming more like *Panorama* and neglecting those lighter, albeit local, British life on which it once made its reputation. Having said that tonight's film about Colin Graver, a Durham boy with a speech defect who was bullied and teased by his mates and eventually threw himself to his death in the river Thames, is vivid and haunting. It is a terrible story of how a young star was somehow allowed to feel that by the age of 17 life had ceased to have any purpose. How it happened is not clear but clearly the state institutions which might have helped him failed to do so. In nine years a special school never gave him the speech therapy recommended by the local authority, while his experience with the YTS was little short of disastrous. A YTS manager who tried to help Colin provides a brutal epitaph: "It's the survival of the fittest and Colin just wasn't one of them."
10.10 *Two Boys and a Girl* from Glasgow. Alison Watt, Peter Howson and Steven Campbell, all former students at the Glasgow School of Art, are profiled.
10.30 *Newsnight* and *Local Elections 90*. David Dimbleby introduces a special edition which features live coverage of the local election results, continued on BBC1 at 11.40.
11.15 *The Late Show*. A special programme featuring some of the best American rap acts. **11.55** *Weekend Update*.
12.00 *Open University: Weekend Outlook*. **12.05am *The Psychology of Addiction*. Ends at 12.35.**



Bob Peck plays a father of twins (9.30pm)

11.40 *Film: The Marriage of Maria Braun* (1979). The first of Rainer Werner Fassbinder's searching parables of post-war Germany, made in homage to the Hollywood melodrama. Hanna Schygulla gives a scintillating performance as a German soldier's widow trying to make ends meet after the end of the Second World War, who becomes pregnant by a GI, and then discovers she is not a widow after all. The treatment may be lush but the tone is definitely on the bitter side of sweetness. Ends at 1.50am.

RADIO 1

FM Stereo and MW
News on the half-hour from 6.30am until 4.30pm, then at 7.30, 8.30 and 10.00pm.
6.00 *Good Morning Britain*. **6.30** *Simon Mayo*. **6.50** *Simon Mayo*. **7.00** *Simon Mayo*. **7.10** *Simon Mayo*. **7.20** *Simon Mayo*. **7.30** *Simon Mayo*. **7.40** *Simon Mayo*. **7.50** *Simon Mayo*. **8.00** *Simon Mayo*. **8.10** *Simon Mayo*. **8.20** *Simon Mayo*. **8.30** *Simon Mayo*. **8.40** *Simon Mayo*. **8.50** *Simon Mayo*. **9.00** *Simon Mayo*. **9.10** *Simon Mayo*. **9.20** *Simon Mayo*. **9.30** *Simon Mayo*. **9.40** *Simon Mayo*. **9.50** *Simon Mayo*. **10.00** *Simon Mayo*. **10.10** *Simon Mayo*. **10.20** *Simon Mayo*. **10.30** *Simon Mayo*. **10.40** *Simon Mayo*. **10.50** *Simon Mayo*. **11.00** *Simon Mayo*. **11.10** *Simon Mayo*. **11.20** *Simon Mayo*. **11.30** *Simon Mayo*. **11.40** *Simon Mayo*. **11.50** *Simon Mayo*. **12.00** *Simon Mayo*. **12.10** *Simon Mayo*. **12.20** *Simon Mayo*. **12.30** *Simon Mayo*. **12.40** *Simon Mayo*. **12.50** *Simon Mayo*. **1.00** *Simon Mayo*. **1.10** *Simon Mayo*. **1.20** *Simon Mayo*. **1.30** 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Sterling needed little support

By Colin Narborough
Economics Correspondent
THE pound appears to have needed only modest help from the Bank of England last month, despite a fall in the pound's value against the dollar, gathering gloom about the economy and the markets' conviction that sterling was extremely vulnerable.

Official reserves of gold and currency — regarded as the best guide to intervention in the currency markets — showed a fall of \$98 million, compared with a \$429 million drop in March. The April figure was in line with City forecasts.

Intervention last month was prompted at the start by a negative response abroad to the pound's fall, and at the end, by a disappointing set of trade figures.

Sterling advanced again yesterday, with no sign of any nervous sell-off before today's local elections, in which the Conservatives are expected to suffer heavy losses.

On its trade-weighted index, sterling closed at 87.1, or 0.2 of a point ahead of the previous close, holding on to the early gains. In the money market, the key three-month interbank lending rate eased slightly.

Britain's high interest rates were seen to be providing adequate underpinning for the pound, although some foreign exchange dealers attributed the pound's rise to the unwinding of long positions in yen and marks.

The financial markets have become increasingly focused on next week's retail prices data, which are expected to show the annual inflation rate surging above 9 per cent.

Final money supply figures showed M0 — the narrow money supply measure still targeted by the Government — growing at an annual rate of 6.3 per cent in March, confirming provisional data.

The Bundesbank's policy-setting council is expected to leave West German key lending rates unchanged when it meets in Frankfurt today.

The message for Royal is defence

CHARLES Winter, chief executive of the Royal Bank of Scotland, is a perplexed man. In the past, he has announced sparkling figures only to see the bank's shares slide. Yesterday, as he admitted to a 7 per cent slide in earnings per share to 13.9p, the market responded by adding 10p to the price.

After the pall cast over the sector by Midland Bank's warning last week, investors were merely relieved that Royal's news was not as bad as feared. Thanks to an exceptional £10.8 million write-back from Third World debt sales, pre-tax profits even rose 2 per cent to £173.6 million.

Behind that, however, Royal showed all the symptoms of a bank coping with a difficult market. Profits at the main bank fell 3 per cent to £138 million, despite a 12 per cent rise in the group's income.

The 15 per cent climb in costs to £376 million pushed the cost/income ratio to 65.4 per cent, 2 per cent higher than a year ago.

Charterhouse, the merchant bank, saw profits slide 19 per cent to £21.1 million due to increased provision, particularly on its portfolio of management buyouts.

Charterhouse is also suffering from the downturn in profitable merger and acquisition work.

The group's restatement of its highly-leveraged transaction exposure from £750 million to £295 million smacks of goalpost transportation, no matter how hard it pleads its case.

In any case, the acid test of Royal's loan book will be the level of its specific bad debt provisions in the next two years. This time, they rose 63 per cent to £47.1 million, out of total provisions of £57.8 million. Even this may be too low, since the charge is still 0.25 per cent of total lending, the same as last September despite the worsening economic scene.

While Royal's European adventure remains an entertaining sideshow, the message at home looks to be defence. Full-year profits are likely to fall at least £10 million short of last year's £336 million before LDC provisions.

At that level, the shares



Hallmarks of a financial wizard: Julian Ogilvie Thompson, of De Beers, yesterday

have a p/e ratio of 6, with a 6.6 per cent yield on the probable 8.4p dividend. Remaining bank fans can find better value elsewhere in the sector.

De Beers

DE BEERS' master plan in setting up a Swiss company — De Beers Centenary, which has all the hallmarks of its financial wizard, Mr Julian Ogilvie Thompson — looks just like a prologue to a play with many acts.

The official line is that Centenary can now be identified as the non-South African twin sister from the same family, and therefore not deserving of the South African political discount factor.

That its birth will mean

greater, and easier, business opportunities can be seized. And that it will facilitate access to international capital markets — not that De Beers, which has a borrowing capacity of £11.7 billion (\$4.57 billion), looks like being in need of trotting the begging bowl round Europe.

The world-wide investment audience has already given De Beers a warm round of applause, and the share price has risen by 20 per cent since the March announcement. At a time of considerable political uncertainty in South Africa, any move which gives a SA-based company a "foreign" element is a welcome aspirin for investors who cannot sleep at night worrying about nationalization.

De Beers' other party line is that Centenary and itself will be "stapled" and only tradeable as one linked unit. However, it seems unlikely that this will always be the case, and betting books are now open as to how long before the cord is cut.

As the moment nears when the unstapling looks like happening, the excitement will grow. Meanwhile, De Beers at £13.70 on a prospective p/e of 5.6 and a prospective 6 per cent yield remains a steal.

Tate & Lyle

TATE & Lyle has been transformed since its last bid for British Sugar four years ago.

Now Tate says that the disposal programme is complete, though Mr Shaw also warns that most of the growth likely in the current year has already come through in the first half. Analysts now anticipate profits of £220 million for the year to September and fully diluted earnings of roughly 30p.

With the shares up 4½p at 276p on the results, that would mean a prospective p/e ratio of 9, which is reasonable. However, the shares have fallen 38p from their recent peak in February, before Tate announced it might bid for British Sugar's ailing parent, Berisford. British Sugar might be worth nearer £800 million to Tate rather than the £478 million it offered last time, but shareholders must insist that Mr Shaw's industrial logic does not tempt him to stumble into one of Berisford's numerous black holes.

Tate & Lyle

TATE & Lyle has been transformed since its last bid for British Sugar four years ago.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Agreed £15m bid for communications firm

THE shares of Continental Microwave (Holdings), the USM communications equipment manufacturer, jumped by 85p to 230p after Pharos Holdings, a subsidiary of Pharos, the Swedish high-technology manufacturing company, made a recommended cash offer worth £15.8 million for the group. Continental shareholders will be offered 230p in cash for each ordinary share, a 59 per cent premium, and 112p for each Continental convertible share.

Continental's directors and certain members of their families, who together hold 26.7 per cent of the shares, have undertaken to accept.

Fatter order book for TI

AT its first annual meeting as chairman of the TI Group, Mr Christopher Lewinton said that first-quarter results were in line with the corporate plan. "Our order books are generally up on this time last year," he said. There was cash in the bank, and he forecast continued good progress in 1990.

Linread price hit by losses

SHARES in Linread fell 5p to 128p after Mr Peter Tahany, the chairman, told the annual meeting that the group's commercial products division had lapsed into losses in the first quarter, and that group profits would be static in the first six months. Short-term measures have been taken to curtail the losses.

Jurys buys Stakis hotel

JURYS Hotel Group, the Irish hotel chain, is buying the Pond Hotel in Glasgow from Stakis for £10.5 million. The acquisition will be partially financed by a one-for-four rights issue to raise £15.7 million (£5.5 million after expenses).

Mr Peter Malone, managing director, said the purchase of the 130-bedroom hotel, with its own leisure club, "is in line with the board's objective of expanding outside Ireland." The directors of Jurys say that pre-tax profits in the year to April will be not less than £15.3 million (£2.27 million). They will be recommending a dividend of 10p to make a total of 15p (10.4p).

Europa issues maiden of 1p

EUROPA Minerals Group, the British-based mining finance house, is paying a maiden dividend of 1p after net profits of £2.41 million for the year to end-January. Previous results are not comparable. The group expanded by selective acquisitions in coal, oil and gas, and gold.

Margree joins ISE division

THE International Stock Exchange has appointed Mr Rod Margree as managing director of its Settlement Services Division. Mr Margree, a corporate director of the financial institutions unit of Barclays Bank, will join the exchange for three years on a full-time secondment.

BLP dividend down

BLP Group, the real wood laminates maker which dismissed its chairman in February after allegations of "serious breaches of his service contract," lifted pre-tax profits from £1.91 million to £2.1 million in the year to end-December. However, as forecast, the final dividend is cut from 2.35p to 0.5p, making 2p (3.6p) for the year.

Turnover jumped from £17.7 million to £48 million, but earnings per share fell from 8.50p to 3.81p, due to an increased number of shares in issue following acquisitions.

American General seeks a buyer after \$6.4bn offer

From John Durie, New York

AMERICAN General, the besieged US insurance group, has put itself on the auction block after facing strong institutional pressure in the wake of a hostile \$6.4 billion takeover bid by Torchmark, the smaller insurance company.

Mr Harold Hook, the chairman of American General, told the group's annual meeting yesterday that he had hired First Boston, the bank, to seek buyers for the company.

American General, which is

listed on the London Stock Exchange, is the eighth largest American insurance group, with assets of \$32 billion. The company has ranked poorly in terms of returns on capital and equity.

In March, Torchmark, the tenth largest insurance group in the US, launched its takeover bid, but withdrew its offer after American General failed to respond. Instead of the bid, Torchmark started a proxy fight to defeat the American General board. On

the eve of the American General meeting, Torchmark was in a strong position to win the battle, with five of the top eight institutional investors backing its claim and another three supporting its argument that American General should put itself up for sale.

The combination of a takeover bid followed by a proxy fight is the latest trend in takeovers in the US. The device was used by BTR in its unsuccessful takeover bid for Norton last month.

Growth in building forecast

By Derek Harris
Industrial Editor

BRITAIN'S construction industry should see better business at home next year and growing opportunities in both western and eastern Europe.

The forecast came from Mr Michael Spicer, Construction Minister, who said he was optimistic despite a number of trade surveys which had suggested a slowdown.

Although new orders had fallen from their peak they were still at historically high levels, he said, and there would be an increase in growth next year.

His argument for growth rested largely on the infrastructure spending which is being committed.

He expected Government capital spending on construction to grow by 22 per cent by 1991. And construction work for the water and electricity industries after privatization should have a "significant" impact throughout the present decade, he said.

Also, Eastern Europe would shortly need reconstructing. "The British construction industry would be well advised to investigate commercial possibilities in Europe, particularly in countries where the German connection is weakest," he said.

Society suspends merger row chief

By Lindsay Cook, Family Money Editor

THE Frome Selwood Building Society, which is at the centre of the first contested building society merger, has suspended Mr Jim Marshall, its chief executive.

The 14,600 members of the £47 million Frome are to vote on May 17 on whether it should merge with the Stroud & Swindon Building Society.

The Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society has offered both investors and borrowers better terms, but these were turned down by the Frome board.

A protest group — the Campaign Against the Stroud Merger — has called for a vote of no confidence in the board to be taken at the special general meeting if the members vote against the Stroud merger.

The requisition, supported by more than 50 signatures, was turned down by the Frome on the grounds that it was outside its rules. The group has now called for an independent audit of the Frome.

Mr Richard Payne, chief executive of the Stroud & Swindon said yesterday: "There is no question whatsoever of financial impropriety or risk to funds."

He refused to comment

further on the suspension, saying the matter was being dealt with confidentially, pending an investigation after allegations made against Mr Marshall and the subsequent disciplinary hearing.

Mr Marshall was told on April 25 that he was suspended on full pay and that he must not discuss the matter in public.

It is understood the allegations suggest that Mr Marshall supported the rival C&G offer.

Its terms would give investors a 3 per cent bonus. The Stroud offer would give them a 2 per cent bonus.

The board has strongly denied that it accepted the Stroud offer because it offered better terms to the directors.

The initial offer from C&G gave the directors better terms than they would get with the Stroud, said Mr Roy Walwin, the chairman.

C&G withdrew these better terms to the directors when they turned down the offer. If members turn down the Stroud offer, which requires 75 per cent of those who vote to be in favour, the C&G offer will not necessarily be put to them.

The board cannot be compelled to ballot the members.

MBS cuts losses to £4.78m

By Philip Pangalos

MBS, the computer services group that was once the largest personal computer distributor in Britain, cut its losses from £13.9 million to £4.78 million in the year to end-December. It did so after a substantial restructuring and the disposal of its sale and distribution businesses.

Group turnover stood at £77.3 million, compared with £116.3 million previously.

The loss per share was reduced from 14.6p to 4.7p and, again, there was no dividend.

Operating losses of discontinued businesses were cut from £6.16 million to £3.84 million. MBS's continuing businesses doubled operating profits from £579,000 to £1.2 million. There was a provision of more than £5.5 million on the disposals, while interest payments were reduced from

£2.57 million to £192,000. Total losses stood at £4.93 million for the year, compared with £21 million previously.

MBS has acquired the Exchange Telegraph Company, a big British computer-maintenance operator, from Exel Group for a nominal sum. MBS said it faced difficulties in building its businesses last year. The shares lost 2p to 16p.

Air UK. Calling the tune between London and Scotland.

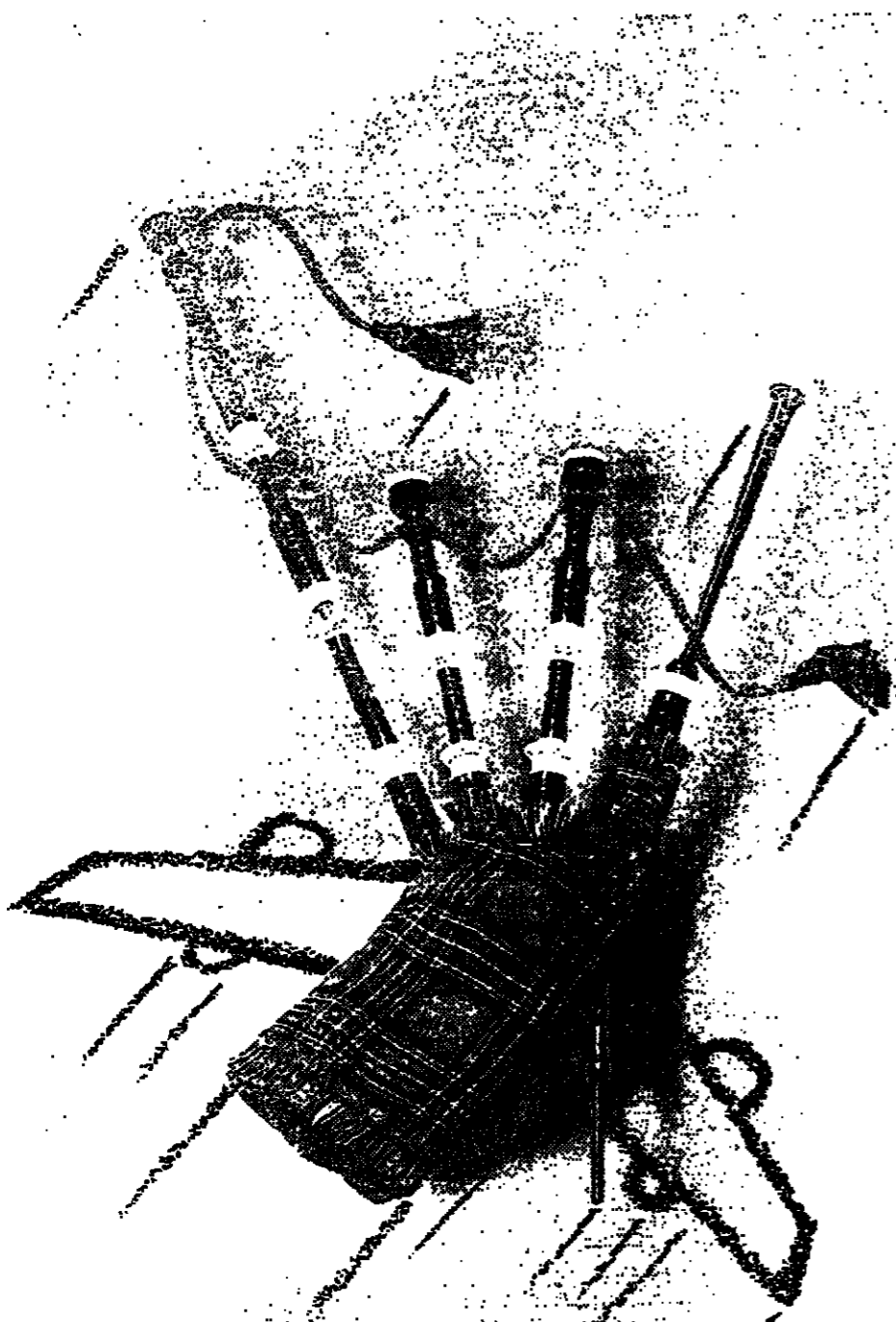
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Nobel to buy Crown paints from Williams for £205m

NOBEL Industries Sweden, the Swedish conglomerate, will buy Crown Berger, the paint division of Williams Holdings, for £205 million.

The move marks an attempt by Nobel to strengthen its position in the European paint market, where it currently ranks fifth, behind ICI, Akzo, Hoechst and BASF.

Crown Berger, best known for Crown paints, is the second largest paint manufacturer in Britain, after ICI, with a market share of about 20 per cent. Mr Brian McGowan, chief executive of Williams, said the sale would lead to an elimination of borrowings, currently running at £180

By Wolfgang Münch, European Business Correspondent

million, and to a reduced exposure to the depressed British consumer products market.

He added that the company did not intend to use the receipts for investments or takeovers. "Cash is king at present and it makes a lot of sense to sit and wait. There is too much uncertainty and it won't be getting better until interest rates come down."

The sale excludes Crown Berger's North American and Portuguese businesses, which account for about 20 per cent of the division's sales. After the sale, Williams Holdings' exposure to consumer products businesses will be reduced to 25 per cent of sales, while

the industrial division will emerge as the predominant part of the company.

Nobel is a conglomerate similar to Williams Holdings, through its exposure to chemical and armaments businesses. Nobel began to build its paint interests about 10 years ago, and has expanded rapidly throughout continental Europe. In Britain, however, its representation has been small.

Today, paints is the company's strongest division. In 1989, it achieved £40.5 million profits (£40.5 million) on £500 million turnover. Partly as a result of the strength of this business, Nobel is now Sweden's largest

chemical firm. The group, as a whole, made £1.24 billion profits last year after financial items on £22 billion turnover.

Crown Berger suffered a fall in profits from £25.6 million to £20.9 million in 1989, although this compared with only £11.4 million in 1987. Crown was bought by Williams Holdings in July, 1987, and Berger was acquired six months later.

Nobel has undertaken to make an additional deferred payment of up to £35 million depending on sales during the current year. The deal met with a positive reaction from the market as the shares rose 9p to close at 250p.

Cadbury in £150m issue

By Graham Searjeant

Cadbury-Schweppes is proposing to raise up to £150 million via an issue of preference shares in Canada as part of a plan to cut borrowings and increase its potential cash-raising power to finance future deals.

The group incurred net borrowings of £420 million last year after making £700 million of acquisitions, raising its loan gearing above 60 per cent, even allowing for the inclusion in the balance sheet of a valuation for some acquired brands.

After a proxy battle with General Cinema, which owns about 17 per cent of its stock, Cadbury also raised its borrowing powers to 2.5 times capital and reserves, theoretically lifting its permitted borrowings to £1.7 billion.

It now plans to create about \$450 million of unquoted preference shares, of which between \$150 million and \$250 million denominated in US and Canadian dollars, will initially be issued.

The share issue, aimed at institutions, would raise the group's cash-raising potential in two ways: by reducing existing borrowings and by increasing its capital base.

At the group's annual meeting, Sir Graham Day, the chairman, said profit growth and integration of acquisitions was going according to plan, but that, for the first half, interest costs would mask the expected growth of profits for the full year.

Kwik Save figures fall short



Disappointing: Sir Timothy Harford, (back), chairman of Kwik Save, with Graeme Seabrook yesterday

By Gillian Bowditch

SHARES in Kwik Save, the discount supermarket group, fell 40p to 470p after disappointing first-half results. The share knocked £69 million off the market capitalization of the company.

Pre-tax profits rose from £35.3 million to £39.5 million for the six months to March 1990, up from £35.3 million. Analysts had been expecting the group to break through the £40 million level.

Sales rose 28 per cent to £785 million and earnings per share increased 12 per cent, in line with profits, to 16.8p. Like-for-like sales, excluding inflation, rose 12 per cent. The interim dividend has been lifted 16 per cent to 3.7p. Interest received fell to £2 million (£2.5 million).

Mr Graeme Seabrook, managing director and chief executive, acknowledged the results were seen as disappointing and said profits had been affected by a number of factors not present during the comparable period last year.

The most significant was the cost of integrating Victor Value, the chain of super-markets Kwik Save bought from Iceland last February. The cost of additional scanning equipment and the fact that interest received was down because of a change in the law relating to the timing of corporation tax payment also contributed.

Kwik Save opened 10 new stores, relocated three and refurbished 46 in the first half. It now runs 650 stores and plans to open a further 20 in the second half. The group operates Tates Lateshoppers, a chain of stores.

Maxwell's 14.9% Bell stake blocked

From Brian Buchanan, Sydney

MR ROBERT Maxwell, the publisher, emerged as the buyer of a strategic stake in Bell Group yesterday, but the acquisition was blocked by the National Companies and Securities Commission, the Australian corporate watchdog.

Mr Maxwell was named as the buyer of more than 48.6 million Bell Group shares — representing 14.9 per cent of the company — after an oral deal at the weekend with Mr

David Aspinall, Bell Group's managing director.

Mr Aspinall was the main buyer of the 19.9 per cent stake sold by the West Australian State Government Insurance Commission on Friday.

Media analysts said Mr Maxwell's interest in Bell was almost certainly linked to Bell's ownership of the West Australian, a daily broadsheet newspaper.

They said his involvement was not completely unexpected, given his often-stated

interest in buying into Australian media.

The 14.9 per cent stake is just below the 15 per cent level, which involves notification to Australia's Foreign Investment Review Board.

However, both sales have been put on hold after the NCSC secured an ex-parte interim injunction in the Federal Court in Melbourne freezing the Friday sale.

The NCSC said it wanted to examine the circumstances of both the Maxwell purchase

and Friday's sale, in which Mr Aspinall bought 16.57 per cent of the company. He was forced to sell the shares after it became clear the acquisition breached the Takeover Code.

Earlier yesterday, Dr Arthur McHugh, the executive director of the NCSC, said: "It appears the original sale to Mr Aspinall was a breach of the Takeover Code because Mr Aspinall, a senior Bond Corp executive, might have been an associate of Bond Corp. Bell Group's main shareholder."

The Guinness trial Auditor's letter was 'wrongly weighted'

THE senior Guinness auditor misled company directors into thinking he had continually wished to raise worrying deals linked to the Distillers bid with them, it was alleged at Southwark Crown Court.

Mr Howard Hughes, responsible for the Guinness account with Price Waterhouse, was said to have written to board members after allegations were made of improper transactions during the 1986 takeover and implicating Mr Ernest Saunders, the dismissed Guinness chief.

Mr Hughes told the court the wording of his letter, dated January 9, 1987, was wrongly weighted.

It related to four areas of concern discovered by the auditors, including £25 million of confidential payments.

Mr Richard Ferguson, QC, defending Mr Saunders, read the first paragraph of Mr Hughes' letter. It said: "You may be aware I have on a number of occasions expressed concern that all directors should be aware of certain transactions relating to the company's affairs and in particular, the acquisition of Distillers."

Mr Hughes agreed he replied to a Department of Trade inspector that a letter from Mr Oliver Roux, the finance director, changed the complexion of the situation.

In response to Mr Ferguson on the opening paragraph of his letter to the board, he said: "I think the weight of it was wrong."

Mr Hughes was asked if it was ever suggested Mr Saunders should have the opportunity to explain his version of events. "There were discussions from time to time about whether he might have information which was useful but I do not believe the company made or approved any of our people making such an approach," he said.

But he denied Lord Ivisagh, the Guinness president, told him that if the investigation was eased Mr Saunders would be more co-operative.

Mr Saunders, aged 54, and three others variously deny 24 counts including theft, false accounting, and breaches of the Companies Act. The trial continues today.

COMMENT

A Texan walks tall in the shadow of Charter

Timing is everything in markets, and Mr Eugene Anderson, the tall Texan who likes to be known as "Gene", has once again proved himself a master of the art. Gene (it costs nothing to be friendly) moved into Johnson Matthey in the wake of the crisis in Johnson Matthey Bankers which all but inflicted fatal damage on its erstwhile parent. With JMB safely tucked up in bed with the Bank of England, Gene managed to push, pull, tease and bully Johnson Matthey back to health. From near dead, it rose to a market capitalization of over half a billion pounds, while debt went in the opposite direction, from half a billion down to virtually nothing.

It was generally accepted that Gene had done a great job, and if his handsome bonus payments were a reflection of his performance, this was a view shared by the board. Events at Johnson Matthey are not dictated, however, by the normal business criteria which govern other companies. The collapse of JMB directly resulted in the increase in the shareholding of Charter Consolidated to 38 per cent, and when Charter began to feel the weight of its own major shareholder, Minoro, bearing down upon it, the stress was passed on to Johnson Matthey. In two dark nights of the long knives last December, both Gene and his chairman, Neil Clarke, who had already been de-emphasized at Charter, moved out. The men who had saved

Johnson Matthey fell victim to a change of pace at the main beneficiary.

But while the improvement brought about under Gene was undeniable, those with a more critical eye were heard to say that he did nothing that should not have been expected of a highly paid and generously incentivized Harvard MBA, and that the time was approaching for a change of style in any case. Some even claimed that the company had become a little flabby. That view could be reinforced by the measures being put in train by his successor, David Davies, a man who has had more top jobs than most of us have had suits. Johnson Matthey is to undergo an expensive restructuring of the kind which, if it is necessary, perhaps should have been carried out under the recovery programme.

Charter, surprise, surprise, declared itself supportive of the restructuring which will knock up to £15 million off profits, blow a hole below the line and which has already knocked the shares back by 20 per cent. Johnson Matthey's other major shareholder, Cookson, with 8 per cent, said nothing. Either Cookson is biding its time for a clever move, or it is wondering why it purchased the shares in the first place. Its "strategic investment" currently appears as a loss leader.

Meanwhile, Gene has moved on to the yet greater challenge of Ferranti. If he cleans up there as he cleaned up at Johnson Matthey, everyone should be happy. Especially Gene.

Red rose blossoms in City

Labour's growing liaison with the City could blossom into a torrid love affair if its intentions for the economy are all as well received as the disclosure that a Kinnock government would want only the National Grid company returned to public ownership. The rest of the electricity industry would be left where Mrs Thatcher intends to put it — with the private sector. The new face of socialism yesterday took on a sudden beauty for the utility sector analysts, and the power sell-off that starts this autumn should now be much easier. As Frank Dobson, the shadow energy secretary, made clear when disclosing the modest re-nationalization idea, tougher regulation and long-term energy strategy are Labour's real concerns, not who owns the industry.

The news was music to the ears of James Capel, the Government's broker,

which is tuning up its marketing show for institutional investors. Now their salesmen can say that electricity is a good deal whatever the government — a "win-win" opportunity. In the event of a Labour government, the parts of the industry of value to investors would remain with their private owners. The distributor companies would hardly mourn the dubious loss of the jointly-owned grid.

Like nuclear power, it was probably best left with government in the first place.

Of much more concern is the low level of the shares of the water companies, the issue which was designed and priced to whet the appetites of investors for the much more difficult-to-swallow electricity package. Unless the stem of water sellers can be staunch, the price for electricity will have to be even lower than current estimates.

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WORKING CAPITAL ON COMMAND

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Knight fights the good fight

THE appointment of former Stock Exchange chief executive Jeffrey Knight as a special adviser to the Federation of Stock Exchanges in the European Community — as revealed in this column this week — has raised a few eyebrows in official Stock Exchange circles. Those eyebrows, raised with pleasure rather than dismay, have been elevated primarily because his task in this new role will be to devise an exchange system to embrace the Continent's top 300 companies. For Knight has apparently crossed swords with key EC members in the past. The "run in" referred to was with the Germans, who disagreed with his proposals for capital adequacy for securities firms. "They wanted them to be far stricter, since they have such a strong banking history, and far less entrepreneurial, which would have put a number of small independent British firms out of business," my inside source reveals. But those proposals have since been redrafted twice, and become even less stringent in the process. "It must have been a unanimous decision to appoint him and so he must now have the support of the Germans," my intrigued informant continued. And his appointment is seen as "tremendously good news" for the City.

Binns bounces in
ONE of the best known characters in the world of financial public relations,

Peter Binns, who founded the Binns Cornwall firm 10 years ago — and has since suffered the triple blow of ill-health and the disintegration of both the firm and his marriage — is about to return. Binns, a popular and normally bubbly man, will become a director of another PR firm, the Haggie Company, with effect from Monday. He will be taking a number of his old and loyal clients with him, and will be given a share stake in due course. The Haggie Company was founded by chartered accountant David Haggie — once finance director of the quoted video and television production company Molinare Visions, now part of WH Smith — four years ago. "I've known Peter for quite a long time — he had once wanted me to join him at Binns Cornwall," Haggie says. "He has had a rotten time and has been treated badly. I have always liked him and think this move could be mutually beneficial." A warm welcome awaits him, I know....



"Phew."

Compact brains

THE much-publicized theft of £292 million of Treasury Bills and Certificates of Deposit from a Sheppards Money Broker messenger in King William Street yesterday has clearly caused some puzzlement in certain less-sophisticated City circles. Upon hearing that the messenger had been "relieved" in a quaint Bank of England-speak — of £122 million of CDs, two young female yellow jackets (juniors) of the floor of the Life market were heard to remark: "How on earth did he manage to fit 122 million CDs in his bag?"

● **FOUR yachts** which were spotted on the same day in Auckland Harbour: Tequila Sunrise, Gin Fizz, Whisky Galore and Cirrhosis of the River.

Naming of blocks

IN A contest which reveals a rare insight into the mentality of its employees, Smith New Court has been inviting its staff to suggest a name for its lavish new office block in Farringdon Road. A 140,000 sq ft building, due to be completed early next year — which Smith New Court is leasing from the Ladbroke subsidiary Gable House Developments — it will boast a large car park, two squash courts, a swimming pool, fully staffed gymnasium and a staff restaurant — all in stark contrast to its present abode in St Swithin's Lane, which is well known to be among the most functional in the City.

Human resources director Robert Timms, who has been offering a magnum of champagne to the winner of the competition, is now sifting through some 42 "polite" suggestions. "The others were all far too rude," he quips. Among those on the censored list are The Railway Tavern, The Farringdon Arms and The Court House.

Oil and water

THE fall-out at County NatWest WoodMac, as a direct result of the firm's dramatic recruitment of up to 100 one-time employees of the defunct American firm Drexel Burnham Lambert, continues. In February, Tim Ferguson, the ambitious and comparatively new managing director of County NatWest Securities, was priding himself on having netted so many key individuals from the debris of the collapsed firm, both in the US and elsewhere. But now the cracks in the attempt to weld the two management teams together are, it seems, beginning to show. And able equity sales supremo Richard Williamson — a pillar of the Stock Exchange Ski Club — who had been poached from Warburg Securities to take responsibility for WoodMac's European and international development, has resigned. "It was by mutual agreement," says County. But word is that one of the aforementioned Drexel recruits was about to be introduced over his head, and so he did the only honourable thing. He should not be unemployed for long.

Carol Leonard

GEC at
run £2b

At 1989
GEC
run £2b

British
purchases
boost
Fitzwilliam

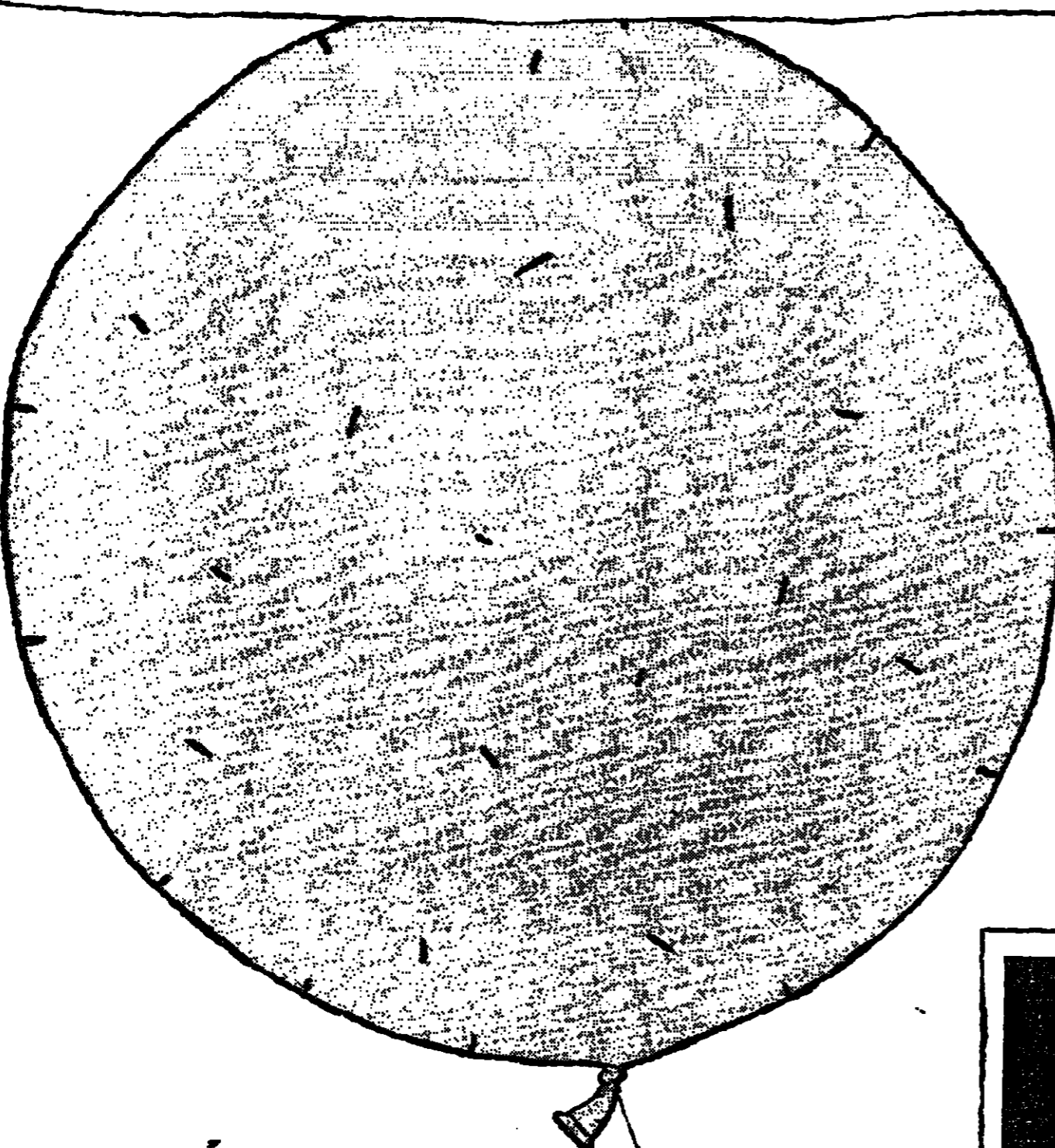
By Our City

ACQUISITION
The acquisition of
the British
Fitzwilliam
in 1989
million
against 1988
percent
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costed 10%
modest
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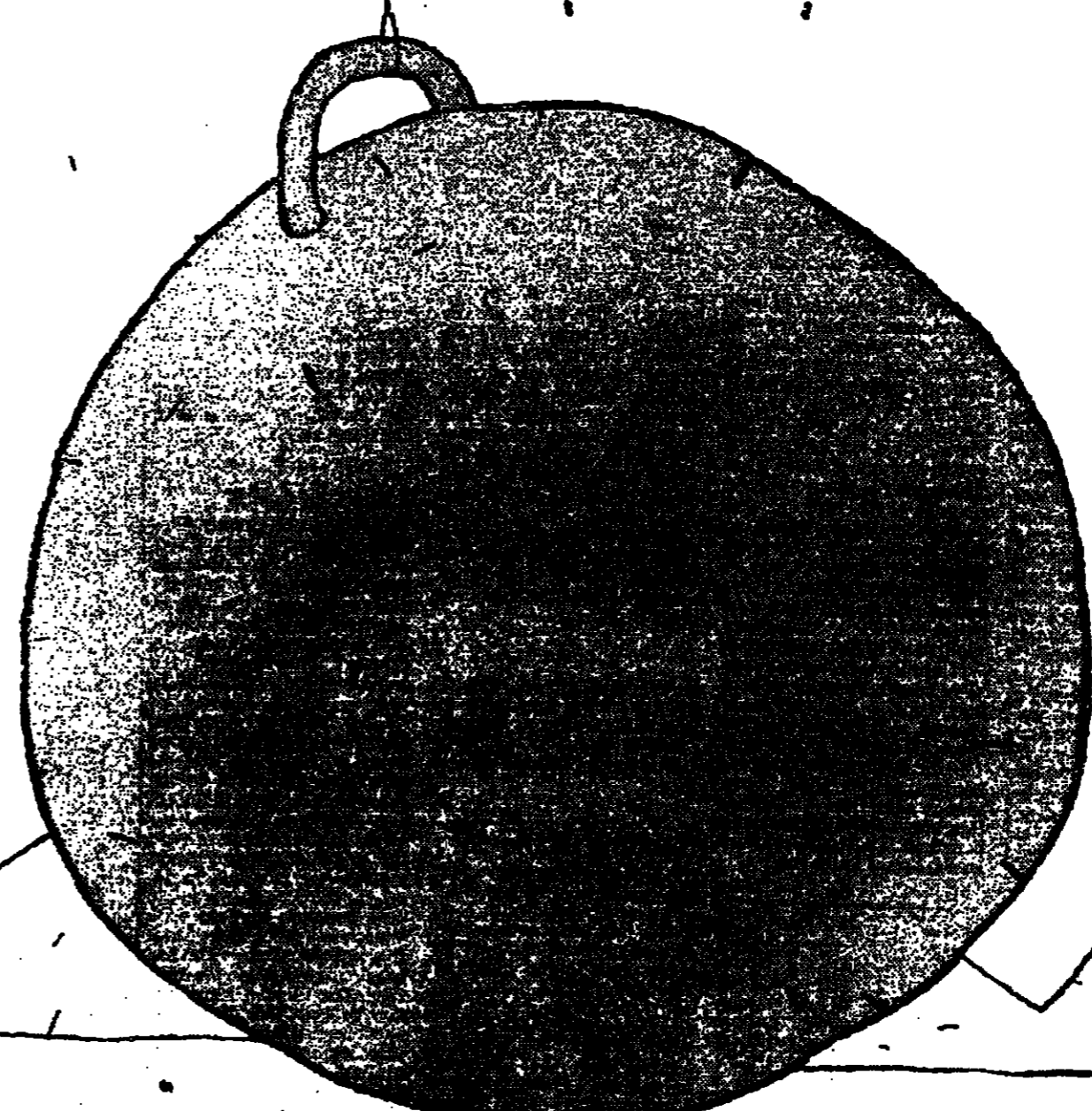
GA

General Accident
POLL RESULTS

Results of the poll taken
convened by The General
held on Wednesday 27th
purpose of considering
of a new non-insurance
General Accident plc.
General Accident: For
Corporation plc to be
resolutions put to the
holders of General
and General Accident
were duly passed by
accordance with the
Act 1985.
Subject to the approval
is anticipated that the
will become effective
General Accident Fire & Marine Insurance Co. Ltd.



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TRADE INDEMNITY PLC

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GEC and BAe in the race to run £2bn helicopter project

By Angela Mackay

AT LEAST five companies have submitted expressions of interest to become prime contractor on the £2 billion EH101 Merlin helicopter project.

The principal contenders are GEC, British Aerospace, Boeing and IBM. Westland also registered its interest, but is unlikely to be awarded the contract because it lacks the financial influence needed to pull the project in line.

The Ministry of Defence will stop taking applications on May 18 and the tender competition will start in June. The prime contractor will be awarded the contract by the end of this year and will be responsible for keeping the project within a specified budget.

Sir Peter Levene, chief of defence procurement at the ministry, became worried about the galloping costs of the project last year, when it also became clear that the helicopter would not be ready for delivery by the end of 1992. In 1986, the Government budgeted £1.3 billion development costs. That figure has been exceeded by more than £500 million.

In February, a parliamentary defence committee said that if costs for the EH101 looked like rising much more, it could prompt the Govern-

ment to question the viability of the entire programme.

Westland has already flown eight of nine pre-production Merlins, which has military and civil models. Last week, a commercial variant designed to carry 30 passengers made its maiden flight.

The helicopter has been jointly developed by Westland and Gruppo Agusta of Italy. They are confident it will find a commercial market, particularly since an anti-vibration system has made the ride much quieter and smoother. Westland is confident it will prove popular with the offshore oil industry.

Systems integration has proved the project's major stumbling block. Westland has said the various radar, sonar and weapons suites have been successfully married, but that there are still hitches, mostly related to spiralling costs.

Mr Alan Jones, Westland's chief executive who has been at the helm for one year, is anxious to have the first production order placed by the end of 1991. Even though Westland's new strategy focuses on civil aviation, military orders provide critical development funds and ensure the maintenance of the company's specialist workforce.



Worried about escalating costs: Sir Peter Levene

Campbell Soup cuts 19% of HQ jobs

From John Dury, New York

THE new chief executive of the Campbell Soup company, Mr David Johnson, has wasted little time in making his mark.

He slashed head office staff numbers by 19 per cent this week.

The move, which will see 364 jobs disappear from the company's New Jersey head office, comes shortly after similar cuts in its British operations.

Last month, Mr Johnson reorganized the UK Freshbake operations, which resulted in staff numbers being cut by 40 per cent.

Mr Johnson took over as chief executive in January when the company was plagued by a split among the Dorrance family, its majority shareholder, over the company's financial performance.

Campbell ranks as one of the worst performers in the United States food industry despite its brand names and Mr Johnson told *The Times* recently about his plans to inject a more profit-orientated approach within the company.

Mr Johnson, who described the head office cuts as a "dramatic culture change," expects to save \$17 million a year on the total wages bill.

President to leave Carter as part of cost-cutting drive

From Philip Robinson, Los Angeles

MR Arthur Ross, the president and co-chief executive of the Carter Organisation, the American division of VPI Group, the public relations consultant, is leaving as part of a move to cut the company's costs.

Six weeks ago, Mr Donald Carter, the founder of the American company, admitted stealing more than \$1 million from clients over a two-year period.

Mr Ross, aged 48, who has been with Carter, which is based in New York, since 1985, said business could be better, and that his departure is part of a programme of cuts in administration costs.

He is one of a number of senior executives who will leave Carter before the end of the month.

VPI is also set to change the name of the American organization in an attempt to distance itself from Mr Carter, aged 41, who has also admitted filing false tax returns. He will be sentenced next month.

Charges against him carry a maximum 11 years' prison term and fines of \$2 million. The tax evasion charges carry penalties of \$2 million. But any prison sentence is expected to be limited to a maximum of four years. Mr

Carter has agreed to pay back the \$1 million he stole from clients, which included Shell Oil, Union Carbide and Revlon. Between 1987 and last year, he routinely billed clients for bogus expenses.

The Carter Organisation is still conducting an internal investigation into the matter. Mr Angus Maitland, the chairman of VPI, has promised legal action against Mr Carter if the tax evasion charge means the company has also been defrauded.

VPI bought Mr Carter's company for \$75 million in 1987. The investigation by the New York State Organized Crime Task Force concluded that the Carter swindle took place between 1987 and 1989 and his tax returns were falsified for the years 1985 and 1986.

Mr Ross said: "We have lost only two clients since March 29 [when Mr Carter admitted his guilt] and we have added between six and 12."

"Our own investigation is still going on. But we are still hoping to find out more about this \$1 million restitution fund and how it will operate for our clients."

Mr Ross will continue with Carter for a few months, after which he will hand over the reins to Mr Dennis Mensch, aged 37, co-chief executive in charge of client services.

Tullow Oil to raise £5.68m

TULLOW Oil, the Irish oil and gas exploration company, is raising Ir£5.85 million (£5.68 million) through a rights and warrants issue to help finance its expansion programme.

The rights issue, which is fully underwritten, will involve 31.3 million new ordinary shares and on the basis of 8-for-24, at Ir13p per share. Shareholders are also being offered three warrants for every eight shares taken up. The warrants entitle shareholders to subscribe for one new share per warrant at Ir18.5p.

Multitrust loss

Multitrust, the investment trust, is not paying a dividend despite an interim forecast of 0.5p. It made a loss of £14,430 in the six months to end-March, compared with a pre-tax revenue of £9,833. There is a 0.41p loss per share, against earnings of 0.25p.

Philips holding

Philips, the Dutch consumer group, has taken a 25 per cent stake in Bang & Olufsen, the Danish audio group, for Dkr340 million (£32.4 million).

IEP lifts stake

Sir Ron Brierley's IEP Securities has raised its stake in United Scientific Holdings to 26.2 per cent.

British purchases boost Fitzwilton

By Our City Staff

ACQUISITIONS in its British motor and cash and carry businesses helped Fitzwilton, the Irish holding company, take its recovery much further in 1989.

Pre-tax profits were Ir£12.1 million (£11.8 million), against Ir£5.3 million in the previous 18-month period.

Earnings per share of Ir11.2p against Ir9.8p increased 56 per cent on an annualized basis.

The dividend of Ir3.5p compares with Ir2.5p for the previous 12 months.

Keep Trust, the motor distribution business, was included for seven months and M6 Cash & Carry, which joined the earlier Roy Hall acquisition, for five months. Motor, cash and carry and the Irish specialized manufacturing businesses all increased contributions.

The motor side, which accounts for about 40 per cent of ongoing profits is still holding its own, thanks to Vauxhall distributorships and because most of its profits do not come directly from car sales.

The cash and carry division, which accounts for about 30 per cent of ongoing profits and is mainly geared to low-price items and food, is still moving ahead.

Last week, Fitzwilton, which is headed by Mr Tony O'Reilly, chairman of HJ Heinz, completed an Ir£80 million subscription for 29.9 per cent of Waterford Wedgwood, the ailing international tableware group, in partnership with Morgan Stanley, US investment bank.

Fitzwilton's initial investment of Ir£25 million, which is showing an initial loss, represents about a fifth of its total assets, but is seen as the long-term basis for a new core division in branded products.

Meanwhile, the group plans to expand further by buying individual motor distributorships and cash and carry businesses.

Keller sold in £26m buyout from GKN

By Derek Harris

GKN, the engineering group, has sold its foundations division — a specialist in building services and site foundations engineering — to its management for £26.2 million.

For GKN, it is not a core business but Keller, as it will now be known, has been growing internationally including by acquisition.

In the year to last December it had a turnover of £101.5 million with a profit, before interest and tax, of £4.4 million.

The deal represents a premium over net assets of £7.1 million.

Keller has developed into a leading international specialist in its field providing services to the construction industry.

These include solving problems of foundation support, underpinning, ground retention, ground water control and seismic protection.

Keller believes it has identified a growing environmental protection market.

Dr Michael West, Keller's chief executive, said: "Keller will be able to take full advantage of the opportunities for expansion that exist across our business and provide effective incentives for our senior staff."

Keller has two operational bases in Britain at Coventry, West Midlands, and Wetherby, West Yorkshire, with others in West Germany and Maryland in the United States.

It expanded into Germany in 1974 by acquisition. This was followed by takeovers in the United States and Britain between 1984 and 1986. But there has also been organic growth.

The management buyout is being funded by a mixture of equity — from Candover Investments, the venture capitalists — and debt provided by Bank of Scotland and Berliner Bank.

Record earnings from an international business.

Six points from Julian Ogilvie Thompson's Chairman's Statement for 1989.

The diamond market

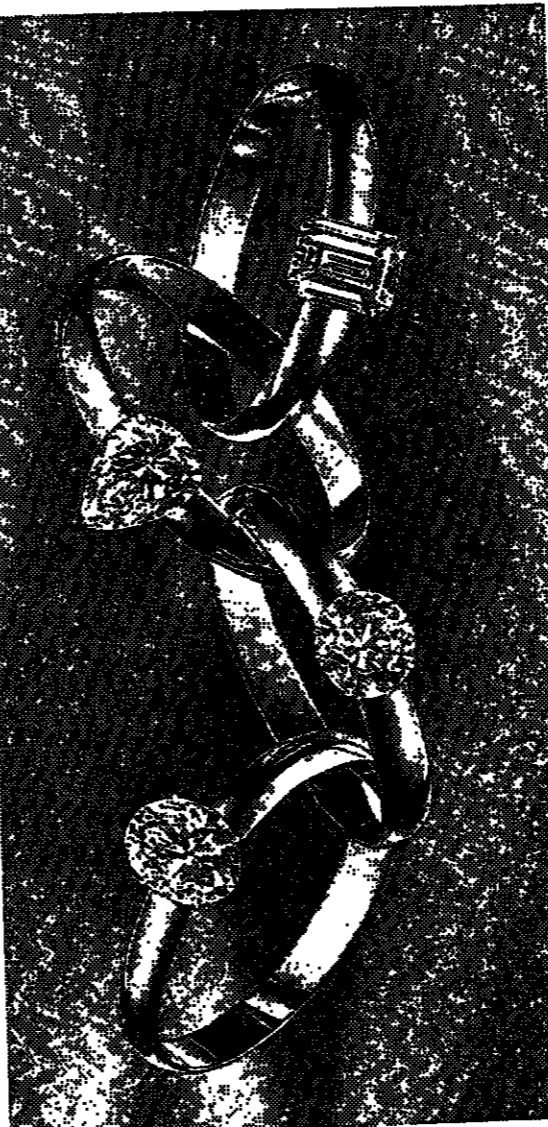
De Beers announced an increase in attributable profits to R2865 million (US\$1127 million) and a 40% increase in dividends. For the seventh year in succession, world retail sales of diamond jewellery set another record. However, as anticipated, growth slowed to a more normal rate and it was a year of consolidation in rough diamond sales. The rough diamond market was strong in the first part of 1990 and we expect another satisfactory year.

New Swiss company

The diamond industry operates on a global basis. In 1989 80% of De Beers' attributable profits were earned outside South Africa. In recognition of this, we have proposed the establishment of a Swiss based company, De Beers Centenary AG, to hold the foreign interests of the group. De Beers and De Beers Centenary AG will continue to co-operate closely to maintain the stability of the industry. These proposals have been well received by the stock market and the substantial re-rating of De Beers will stand shareholders and the industry in good stead in the years to come.

Namibian independence

De Beers and our subsidiary CDM applaud Namibia's admission to the community of nations and, as longstanding corporate citizens, reaffirm our commitment to its



The diamond industry employs more than 1 million people in 40 countries around the world, all linked by a common goal and all working toward a defined target. We owe our success to their commitment.

development and success. This commitment is best illustrated by our investment in the Navachab gold mine, and the new diamond mines at Auchas and Elizabeth Bay. CDM marked Namibia's independence with a special donation of US\$2 million towards a national educational institute.

The full Chairman's Statement is contained in the Annual Report of the Company for the year ended 31st December 1989, which has been posted to Shareholders.

De Beers

De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited (Incorporated in the Republic of South Africa) London Office, 40 Holborn Viaduct, London EC1P 1AJ.

GA General Accident

POLL RESULTS

Results of the polls taken at the meetings convened by The Court of Session and held on Wednesday, 2nd May 1990 for the purpose of considering a Scheme of Arrangement in connection with the establishment of a new non-insurance holding company 'General Accident plc'.

General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation plc is pleased to announce that the resolutions put, respectively, to meetings of the holders of General Accident Ordinary Shares and General Accident Convertible Loan Notes, were duly passed by the requisite majorities in accordance with Section 425(2) of the Companies Act 1985.

Subject to the approval of The Court of Session it is anticipated that the Scheme of Arrangement will become effective on 6th July 1990.

General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation plc
World Headquarters: Pittsfield, Perth, Scotland FK2 0NL

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"WE WON AN AWARD FOR DEMONSTRATING THAT OUR EQUIPMENT MET EUROPEAN STANDARDS."

Sheerness Steel won a National Training Award by using their brains.

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And it didn't take long for them to see where the growth potential lay. In their most precious resource, the workforce.

An extensive training programme helped them to equip their staff with the necessary skills.

Mastering foreign tongues.

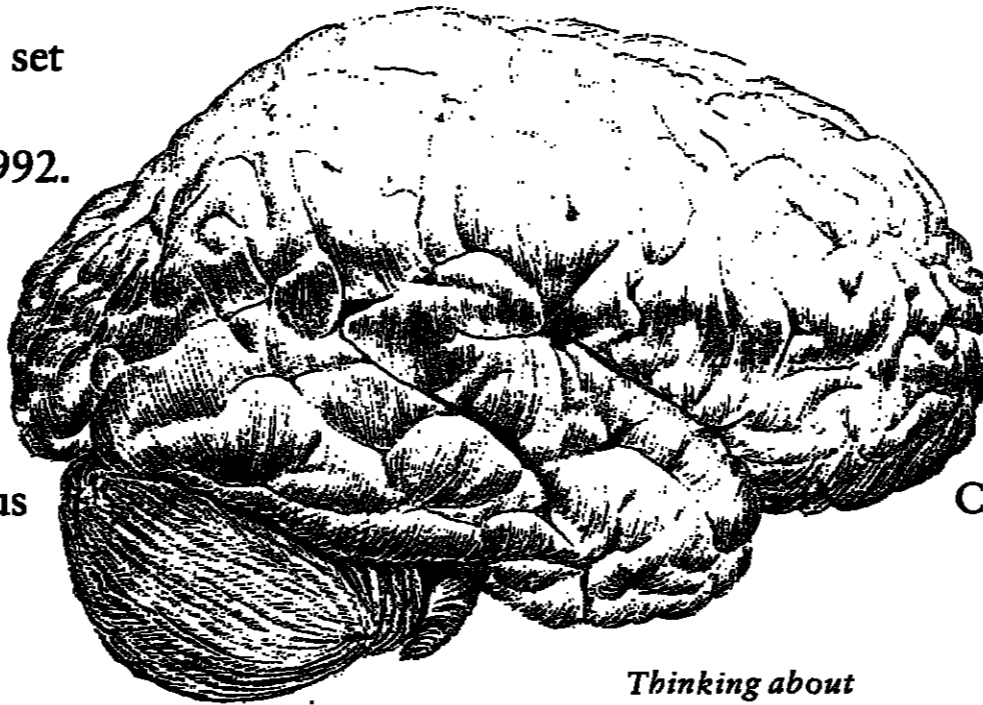
Now, productivity levels are above Germany's average.

And the number of days lost due to accidents has been halved.

It was this foresight in preparing for the challenge of the Single European

Market that last year won them The Times 1992 Award.

A further 79 organisations were



Thinking about European opportunities.

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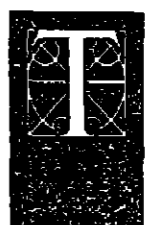


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ALPHA STOCKS

Vol '000	Vol '000	Vol '000	Vol '000
ADT 2,558	CJ 1,300	Lloyds 2,513	Seas 1,174
Abbey Nat 2,558	Coors 1,300	Lloyds 2,513	Seas 1,174
Adams 748	Coors 1,300	Lloyds 2,513	Seas 1,174
Adams 748	Coors 1,300	Lloyds 2,513	Seas 1,174
Adams 748	Coors 1,300	Lloyds 2,513	Seas 1,174
Adams 748	Coors 1,300	Lloyds 2,513	Seas 1,174
Adams 748	Coors 1,300	Lloyds 2,513	Seas 1,174
Adams 748	Coors 1,300	Lloyds 2,513	Seas 1,174
Adams 748	Coors 1,300	Lloyds 2,513	Seas 1,174
Adams 748	Coors 1,300	Lloyds 2,513	Seas 1,174

WORLD MARKET INDICES

Index	Value	Daily change	Yearly change
The World (free)	705.4	0.8	-16.4
Europe (free)	126.0	1.3	-10.5
Asia (free)	126.9	1.3	-10.5
Nth America (free)	154.9	0.7	-5.2
Nth America (free)	154.9	0.7	-5.2
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Nth America (free)	154.9	0.7	-5.2
Nth America (free)	154.9	0.7	-5.2

RECENT ISSUES

Equities	Value	Daily change	Yearly change
ABN Leisure (125p)	113	16%	194 +1
ADG Group (14p)	50	16%	194 +1
Adrian New Euro (100p)	50	16%	194 +1
Argos Plc	88	16%	194 +1
Beta Global Emarg (100p)	88	16%	194 +1
Blochan Hops (1p)	88	16%	194 +1
Buckingham Nw	88	16%	194 +1
Courts Textiles	88	16%	194 +1
Dakota Gp Nw	88	16%	194 +1
Dartmoor Inv Tst (100p)	88	16%	194 +1
Eurochem	88	16%	194 +1
F&C German	88	16%	194 +1
First Inland (100p)	88	16%	194 +1
Fleming Euro IT	88	16%	194 +1
French Prop Tst	88	16%	194 +1
Garmore Emarg Pacific	88	16%	194 +1
German IT	88	16%	194 +1
Goldsmith	88	16%	194 +1
Henderson Highland (100p)	88	16%	194 +1
Mtn Curia Euro (100p)	88	16%	194 +1
Midland Radio	88	16%	194 +1
Novel (100p)	88	16%	194 +1
Nth Investors	88	16%	194 +1
Plasma Mining	88	16%	194 +1
OS Hinge (100p)	88	16%	194 +1
Slam Select (100p)	88	16%	194 +1
TR High Inc (300p)	88	16%	194 +1
Torway & Carls (100p)	88	16%	194 +1
Venture Inv Tst (70p)	88	16%	194 +1
Witshire Brew (70p)	88	16%	194 +1

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STOCK MARKET

Dealers find little cheer despite extended rally

SHARE prices extended this week's rally with what dealers described as the classic "dead cat bounce" — an upward movement following a sharp fall, but displaying few signs of life.

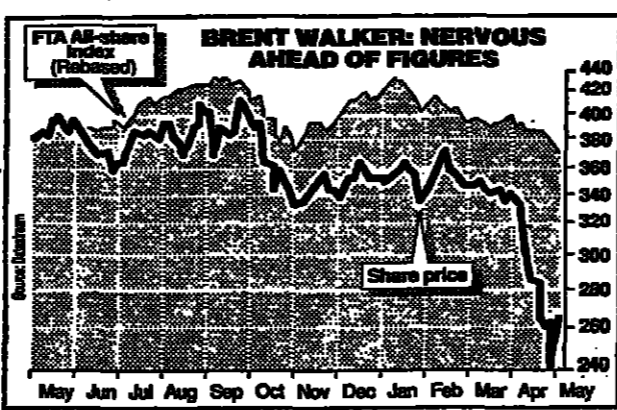
An overnight rise on Wall Street encouraged a few cheap buyers early in the session in London, putting market-makers on the defensive in thin conditions. But dealers complained of little real follow-through and said the turnover figure of 433 million shares had been artificially boosted by several small programme trades.

As a result, prices closed below their best levels of the day, with the FT-SE 100 index ending 19.7 points up at 2,137.6, having been 27 points higher at one stage. The FT index of 30 shares rose 14.5 to 1,678.0.

Government securities clawed their way back after a dull start to end 24 higher at the longer end, supported by another firm performance from sterling.

Among leaders, British Steel rose 2 1/2p to 140p, helped by a recommendation from BZW. Rascal Telecom climbed 1 1/2p to 32 1/2p, revived by a bullish recommendation from Warburg Securities, the broker. Warburg calculates the group's net asset value at almost 450p a share and believes there is still plenty of scope for growth in the cellular telephone market. Both the Rascal "twins" have been a dull market of late, with unwanted stock trickling out of the US, where the cellular telephone market has lost some of its glamour rating.

Last week, Rascal Telecom gave a presentation, arranged by Hoare Govett, to fund



managers, and has also attracted the support of BZW. After weeks of speculation, Williams Holdings, the industrial conglomerate, has confirmed plans to dispose of its Crown Berger Paints business. Sweden's Nobel Industries is paying £240 million in cash. Williams acquired Crown from Reed International in 1987 and bought Berger a year

later. Williams responded with a rise of 9p to 250p. The news revived hopes of a full bid for Yale & Valor, the heating appliances and security group. Its shares rose 1 1/2p to 28 1/2p. Williams holds a near 6 per cent stake in Yale & Valor and there was speculation at one time that it would eventually make a full offer for the rest.

As expected, Fairline Boats sank 60p to 730p after the group's denial that it had received a bid approach. The breakdown in bid talks left

with the unchanged profits. The shares gained 10p to 169p and succeeded in dragging the rest of the clearing banks out of the doldrums.

Rises were seen in Barclays Bank, 1 1/2p to 520p, Lloyds Bank, 5p to 258 1/2p, National Westminster Bank, 1 1/2p to 320p, and Midland Bank, 4p to 284p.

News of a rationalization cutting hundreds of jobs at Johnson Matthey, the precious metals group, left the shares 22p lower at 225p. Tate & Lyle benefited from

better-than-expected interim figures showing pre-tax profits up from £70 million to £87.5 million. The shares lifted 4 1/2p to 276p. But the market gave a cool reception to half-time trading news from Kwik Save, down 46p to 470p, with profits only £4 million ahead at £39 million.

Brent Walker, the leisure group, remained a volatile market ahead of full-year figures next week. Analysts are looking for pre-tax profits of between £65 million and £70 million, against £41.9 million last time. Share disposals by the directors on the last possible day of the open season has cast a cloud over sentiment in recent weeks. However, the shares rose 6p to 265p.

The City has also become concerned about the group's high level of debt and is worried that interest charges will have eaten into profits.

Wellcome, the pharmaceutical group, rose 14p to 676p ahead of interim figures today. Stockbrokers are forecasting a rise in pre-tax profits of 29 per cent to £165 million, with sales of Retrovir, the only approved anti-Aids drug, climbing 44 per cent to £85 million. For the full-year, Schroders has pencilled in profits of £360 million (£282 million).

Pfizer, the electrical appliances group, rose 5p to 212p as the group embarked on its own share buy-back programme. This week, it has bought a total of 12,500 ordinary shares and 17,500 A shares, 8p better at 170p.

Pfizer is capitalized at £15 million and has about £8 million in cash on deposit.

Michael Clark

Burger King switches to Coke

From Philip Robinson, Los Angeles

THE war between Coca-Cola and Pepsi, the soft drinks groups, heightened this week when the Burger King fast food chain made the switch.

The estimated \$2.3 billion contract for America's second largest hamburger chain, with 5,400 outlets, was taken from Pepsi after six years.

It will mean every other fast food customer in America will be drinking Coke with a meal.

Burger King, part of Grand Metropolitan, which is headed by Mr Allen Sheppard, sought fresh proposals from both companies nine months after it had confirmed Pepsi as its

US supplier, when its five-year contract came up for renewal last year.

Burger King said: "We review these contracts once a year and two months ago asked each company for a new proposal. We were not dissatisfied with Pepsi, but Coca-Cola offered us the best package in terms of sophisticated dispensing, a special Burger King account management team and rewards on volume of sales."

Coca-Cola said: "They will be one of our biggest customers, we will now have more than half the market

with this new contract. The thing that the last few years has taught the food industry is that you cannot supply the drinks to restaurants and be their competition."

PepsiCo is America's largest fast food restaurant owner with Kentucky Fried Chicken, Pizza Hut and Taco Bell.

Within seven months Pepsi will lose another fast food contract to Coke when Wendy's, a hamburger chain, changes suppliers.

Coke supplies 100,000 American restaurants owned by the five main fast food chains, including McDonald's.



Sheppard: \$2.3bn deal

WALL STREET

Early rise for Dow

New York THE Dow Jones industrial average was 6.76 points ahead at 2,675.68 in early trade. ● Tokyo — The Nikkei index rose 483.81 points, or 1.63 per cent, to 30,173.64. ● Hong Kong — The Hang Seng index rose 12.58 points to 2,957.76. ● Frankfurt — The Dax index gained 30.16 points from Monday's close to end at 1,843.41 after the May Day holiday. ● Singapore — The Straits Times industrial index shed 0.22 of a point to 1,458.18. ● Sydney — The All-Ordinaries index rose 22.3 points to 1,462.9.

(Reuters)

May 2	May 1	May 2	May 1	May 2	May 1
Monday	Monday	Monday	Monday	Monday	Monday
Abbott Lab	88	67%	Enron	52	51%
Adams	48%	47%	Energy	15	15%
Adams	48%	47%	Energy	15	15%
Adams	48%	47%	Energy	15	15%
Adams	48%	47%	Energy	15	15%
Adams	48%	47%	Energy	15	15%
Adams	48%	47%	Energy	15	15%
Adams	48%	47%	Energy	15	15%
Adams	48%	47%	Energy	15	15%
Adams	48%	47%	Energy	15	15%

TRADITIONAL OPTIONS

First Dealings Last Dealings Last Declaration For Settlement
Call options were taken out on: 2/5/90 Atlantic Res, Barisford, Celtic Res, Hanson
Wm, Nat Energy, Parkfield Group, Priest Marinos, Sampson, Tusker Res, Rusek Res,
Puts & Calls: Search & Search, Summer International.

CIS

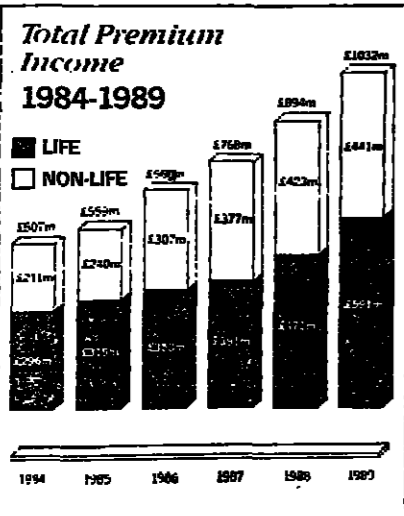
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£1 BILLION BREAKTHROUGH

Record growth in premium income

Results for 1989

- Another record increase in premium income, to £1,032 million (exceeding £1 billion for the first time).
- Life assurance and pensions premium income up by 25% to £591 million.
- Motor and property insurance premium income up to £411 million.
- Household and motor policyholders qualify once again for special discounts on their premiums after just 3 years.
- Surplus on life assurance and pensions business up by 29% to £379 million — further increases in bonuses.
- Highly successful launch of first two unit trusts by CIS Unit Managers Ltd.



It is pleasing to be able to look back on yet another successful year for the Society. The pattern of our business is changing much more rapidly than was the case ten or more years ago, and the future success of the Society will depend on our ability to respond to the radical changes being brought about in the financial environment in which we operate.

From the Report of the Chairman, Mr. D. J. Wise, OBE, to the Annual General Meeting on 2nd May 1990.

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Neil Shaw
Chairman & Chief Executive

TATE+LYLE

UNAUDITED INTERIM RESULTS	1990	1989
Turnover	£1,682m	£1,517m
Profit Before Tax	£87.5m	£70.2m
EPS (Fully Diluted)	11.7p	9.0p
Interim Dividend	3.3p	2.9p
Extraordinary Profit	£28.8m	-

- Turnover up 11%
- Profits up 25%
- EPS up 30%
- Interim dividend 14%

These Unaudited Interim results do not constitute full financial statements. Details of the Interim Report for the 26 weeks to March 31, 1990 are being mailed to shareholders.

Further copies may be obtained from: N. J. Nightingale, Secretary, Tate & Lyle PLC, Sugar Quay, Lower Thames Street, London EC3R 6DQ.

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Ancient Sl

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Worried about

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MORSE

● MEDICINE: SURGERY BREAKTHROUGH
● TECHNOLOGY: LONDON CALLING

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Our future in the house of the rising sun?

Those who want to be green could soon go one step further — by living in a green house. Nick Nuttall reports on a solar design which cuts emissions of harmful gases and saves on fuel bills

During the next few weeks, tests of a unique home design will bring the reality of a green house closer to the average British family. The home uses solar energy in an active way that suits Britain's minimal exposure to sunlight.

If implemented widely, the system would play a large role in cutting the emission of gases which are the main offenders in global warming and the so-called greenhouse effect.

Industrial engineers with British Steel, British Alcan and Cape Metal Products are to begin final trials on heat "harvesters", in the form of specially designed roof tiles, for a house which uses solar energy to heat rooms and hot water with unprecedented efficiency.

The tests mark the fruition of an Isle of Wight architect's dream of harnessing solar energy. The architect, Alan Ridett, says: "This design allows you to use the nuclear power station in the sky, which dumps its waste 93 million miles away. When we burn coal or other fossil fuels, we are only releasing locked-up solar energy. With this building we can instead take it directly."

Mr Ridett's building has been called the "endothermic" house. Several large companies are now planning to construct the first 13 endothermic houses at Wootton, on the Isle of Wight, this year. The Cranfield Institute of Technology in Bedfordshire will monitor the project.

The move comes after a favourable assessment of the system by Dr Bruce Denness, former professor of engineering at Newcastle University, and Professor Alex Hardy, former head of building sciences at Newcastle. Their investigation was backed by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

The two scientists, now at the Bureau of Applied Sciences on the Isle of Wight, believe the endothermic building principle is ready for the mass market and "should present no significant manufacturing problems".

More than 80 per cent of a household's energy goes towards heating rooms and hot water, studies have shown.

The DTI-funded report concludes: "This totally benign system offers the promise of achieving major abatement of the greenhouse effect."

Last week, the Watt Committee on Energy, an independent body drawn from 60 professional institutions, met at the Royal Geographical Society, in London, to debate its working party's recommendations on technological solutions to the greenhouse effect.

The findings, to be presented to the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climatic Change later in the year, endorse measures such as the introduction of gas and advanced gas-fuelled power plants and the promotion of renewable energy sources such as wind and tide.

Among the proposals are

plans for greater use of combined heat and power systems in industry and commerce and, in line with policy in other northern European nations, the promotion of public transport and the rail network.

Energy conservation for buildings was identified as one of the most crucial areas Britain needed to investigate if greenhouse gas emissions were to be reduced.

Projects in Britain and abroad have attempted to transform sunlight into electricity either actively, through the development of photo-electric cells or, passively, using special cladding materials on roofs and walls to trap solar energy.

Mr Ridett's design uses an "active" solar collection system. This, he explains, works in reverse to a refrigerator through a heat pump which circulates water around a house. "Instead of heat being pumped out of the back to chill the inside, the heat pump will endeavour to chill the atmosphere and dump energy inside," he says.

The system can operate during the day and night and at temperatures below freezing point. At the heart of the design, which has been patented internationally, is the pump, metallic roof tiles through which water circulates in constrained channels and three variable temperature water stores sunk in the foundations.

Calculations by Dr Denness and Professor Hardy estimate that, for every unit of electricity spent on driving the heat pump on a winter's day, the system delivers five times the energy gained from outside.

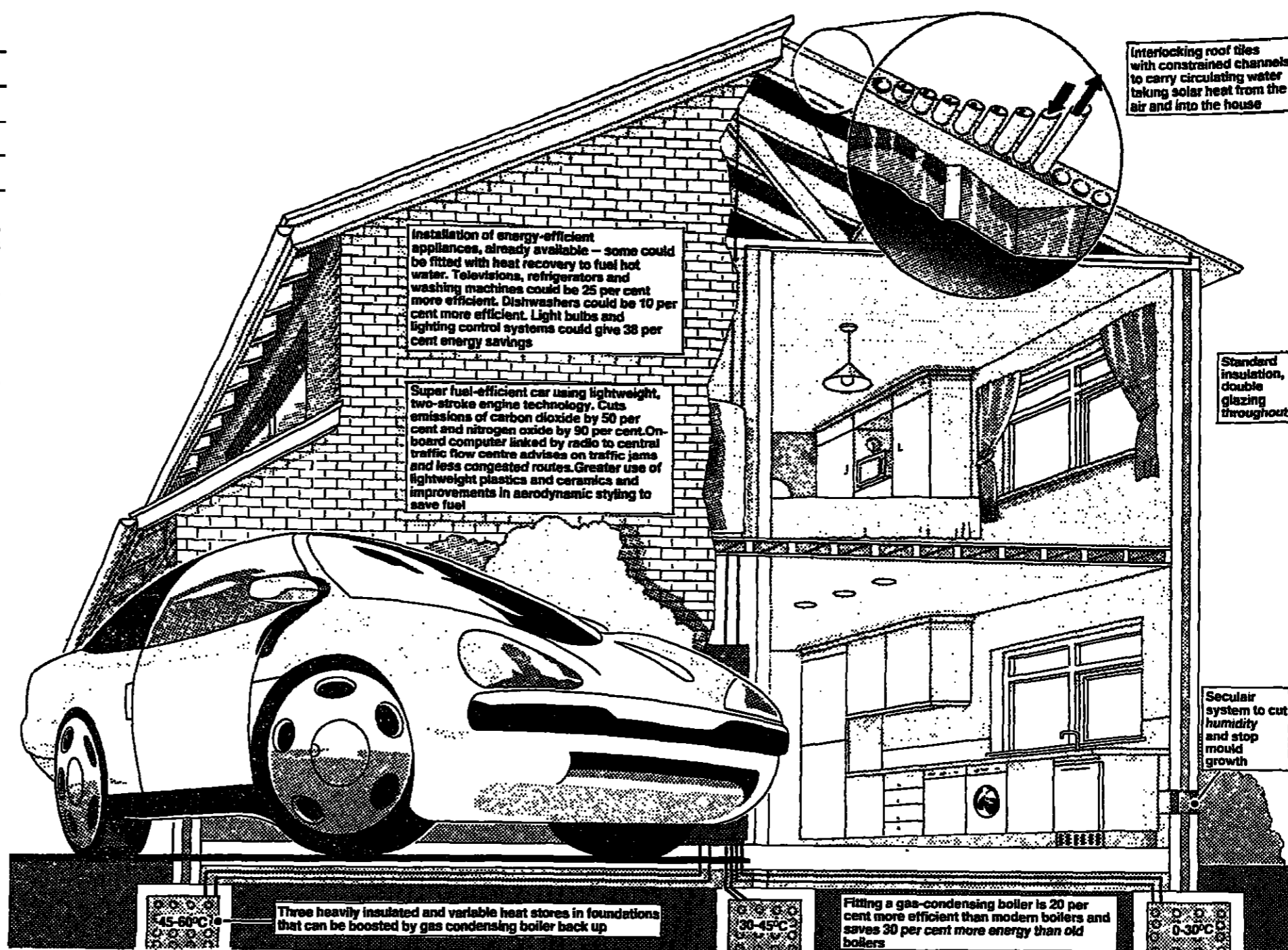
They say this could save a household between 38 and 50 per cent on an annual heating bill. With the cost of building endothermic potential into a home estimated at between £300 and £900, it is calculated that the system will pay for itself between one to three-and-a-half years, sooner in some cases.

Indeed, the returns could take as little as a day with a company in Hong Kong claiming it can provide the necessary technology to add only a few pounds to the cost of a new house.

Dr Denness says commercial buildings and industrial premises will also be able to use the technique. The system meets the objectives of the Watt Committee's working party. The group has tried to identify areas in which Britain can technically and cost-effectively curb its emissions in the near and medium term, rather than contemplating more esoteric and futuristic technology.

The working party has calculated that between eight and more than 11 million tonnes of carbon dioxide, the main offender in the greenhouse effect, could be cut if homes were fitted with loft, wall and water tank insulation as well as double-glazing and draught-proofing.

One drawback to heavily insulating homes, however, is that moisture levels can rise, leading to condensation and mould growth. A solution may lie in a new system,



known as Secular, being installed by Laing Homes and several local authorities, including Gateshead, in Tyne and Wear.

Four vents that use mineral wool are installed in a home's air bricks, alleviating the need for electrical dehumidifiers and the constant emptying of collected water. The system can keep the relative humidity of a home below the critical 70 per cent level even on a cold night, it is claimed. If techniques exist to heavily insulate houses and keep them damp free, costs remain the only real barrier to widespread implementation.

Householders must be encouraged to install new technology by incentives, the Watt Committee believes. "Homes are bought and sold, on average, every eight years. You could consider some kind of energy conservation tax break then," Dr Ken Gregory, a member of the working party, says.

Andrew Warren, director of the independent Association for the Conservation of Energy (ACE), says the public must be made aware of the savings to be had from available technology, particularly in energy-efficient heating systems.

Mr Warren says this need is highlighted by the poor penetration of so-called gas condensing boiler systems, also identified by the Watt Committee as having a crucial role to play in curbing emissions.

According to OFFgas, the Government's gas industry

watchdog, these systems are 20 per cent more efficient than modern boilers and 30 per cent more efficient than older boilers. ACE claims such systems could cut carbon dioxide emissions from each home by up to 1.2 tonnes annually and, with 11.5 million homes in Britain using gas-fired central heating, the benefit to the environment is clear. Yet only one per cent of the estimated 830,000 new boilers installed in Britain each year is of the gas-condensed kind.

Mr Warren says Britain also needs an energy labelling scheme similar to those already operating in the United States and Australia. These give symbols on major electrical goods, such as washing machines and freezers, to indicate how energy efficient they are.

Other suggestions include heat recovery systems on refrigerators for hot water, reducing the temperatures of dishwashers through the use of chemical sterilization and the wider use of lighting control systems for homes and offices.

The committee also identified road transport as a crucial area in the campaign against carbon dioxide emissions. Dr Gregory believes cars and trucks could account for a 10 per cent rise in carbon discharges in Britain by 2005.

The committee believes technical and supply problems will continue to hamper the development of environmentally friendly fuels, including alcohols, hydrogen and gas.

Electric cars, which required the burning of fossil fuels at power stations to charge batteries, were also

considered something of a false hope. However, the committee believes cuts in emissions can be made with improvements in electronic engine-management systems, injection technology and a wider use of lightweight materials.

Fuel-efficient engines were identified as holding the greatest promise, including advanced two-strokes with the potential to cut petrol consumption by between 25 and 30 per cent.

One such engine, the Orbital, was developed by Australian Ralph Sarich in the Seventies. General Motors recently entered mass produc-

tion with a car that uses the system.

The Orbital engine is claimed to reduce by up to 90 per cent the discharges of nitrogen oxide, another offending greenhouse gas, because of the lower operating temperatures of two-strokes. Carbon dioxide emission can also be reduced by up to half.

The Orbital's weight-power rating is at the heart of the improvements. The unit is also claimed to be 25 per cent cheaper to make than a normal four-stroke engine. Several other American and Japanese car companies are also considering two-stroke cars.

The committee says Government policy also has a powerful role to play. Encouraging bus and rail transport and a reduction in motorway speeds from 120kmh to 90kmh would help. The Government could also consider ways of encouraging smaller car engines through legislation and other incentives. In the United States, for example, a manufacturer's model range must average a fixed level of fuel efficiency.

Whether Britain can achieve its avowed intention of stabilizing greenhouse gas emissions by the end of the century remains to be seen.

Clearly, curbing emissions will not only require political will and technical effort, but careful planning. In 1973, the Government decided Britain had no need for the National Industrial Fuel Efficiency Service and closed its doors just weeks before the oil crisis.

Nevertheless, false economy still happens in the energy enlightened Nineties. Last week, it emerged that a school in Rotherham, South Yorkshire, had been told by the local council to turn up the boilers and open doors and windows. The council had calculated it could get a cheaper rate by burning more gas.

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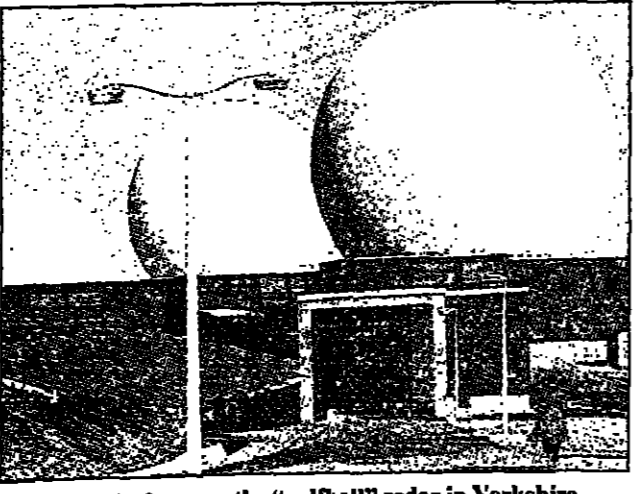
Ancient shape of new technology

THE three huge "golfball" structures at Fylingdales, on the north Yorkshire moors, are to disappear. In their place will be a vast pyramid of steel and anodized aluminium.

In a rare invitation to the inner sanctum of the site, at the RAF base at Fylingdales, reporters were yesterday shown the start of construction of the new structure. The pyramid is part of a \$250 million (£156 million) programme to modernize technology designed 30 years ago.

The 84ft radar dishes, protected from the weather in fibreglass and plastic geodesic, or golfball-shaped, radomes, 140ft in diameter and 160ft high, will give way to phased-array radar.

Fylingdales is one of three long-range radar sites that form the United States ballistic missile early warning sys-



Symbol of an era: the "golfball" radar in Yorkshire

tem (BMEWS). The others are at Thule, in Greenland, and Clear, Alaska.

Modernization of the three sites is a contentious issue

between the United States and the Soviet Union because of the possible use of the sites beyond their original tasks if a "Star Wars" conflict ever took place.

With more than 8,500 man-made objects whirling around the Earth, the BMEWS stations have to decide if the sudden appearance of a new object constitutes the launch of a hostile missile.

Inside two of the Fylingdales radomes, radar dishes are swivelling to the east and north, looking 3,000 miles into space. They can detect an object over Moscow the size of a biscuit tin. The third dish, a

tracker, homes in on objects seen in the scan. Information is continuously fed into a computer system, the missile impact predictor, for identification. The computer compares the incoming data with its records of satellites and articles in orbit. Anything that cannot be identified triggers an alarm.

The BMEWS stations were designed to detect Soviet ICBMs in the trajectory considered most likely 25 years ago, from the north across the Arctic Circle. But sea-launched missiles can now come from any direction.

BMEWS equipment, which takes up to 15 seconds to track the path of a missile, became vulnerable as the volume of junk in space increased and multiple warhead (MIRV) weapons were developed.

The effectiveness of phased-array radar was established 20 years ago, but microelectronics was needed for it to be put into practice.

The limitations of a moving radar aerial are removed by a fixed radar that produces a beam that can, at bewildering speed, scan a 360-degree sphere by electronic steering.

The pyramid faces are composed of small triangles - they form tiny radar aerials that send out pulses.

Pearce Wright

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



Keys to a problem

Many keyboard users suffer pain. Is RSI a condition or a myth?

Chris Lewis and Matthew May report

Efforts to understand and remedy the complaints suffered by increasing numbers of keyboard users are being hampered by generalization and myth, according to a group of British experts who have studied the problem.

The condition known as Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI), linked to the use of desktop computers and terminals, is a serious and sometimes disabling complaint that has led already to individual settlements of more than £40,000.

Brian Pearce, a director of the Human Sciences and Advanced Technology Research Institute, said this week that RSI was "a facile acronym describing a phenomenon rather than a condition". The institute is part of Loughborough University of Technology, in Leicestershire, and has done extensive research on the problem.

Addressing a conference entitled "Upper Limb Disorders among Keyboard Users", Mr Pearce argued that pressure groups were using the term RSI for a range of problems from specific clinical conditions such as tenosynovitis to cramp.

Mr Pearce also argued that RSI was caused by a complicated range of factors of which the computer hardware was only one. He said a psychological component could be another main factor.

"When someone suggests that they are suffering from RSI, they might well be experiencing excruciating pain and discomfort; indeed, there is very little evidence that the sufferers are faking or imagining their symptoms."

"But there is increasingly strong evidence that the causes of their pain and discomfort are not solely the physical aspects of their workplace to which they attribute their disability," he said.

RSI is manifest as varying degrees of discomfort felt in the hands, wrists, shoulders and back. The initial stage is characterized by numbness, pins and needles and sharp pains in the affected joints. If left untreated, the problem can result in long-term paralysis. Until recently, it was difficult to claim industrial injury compensation because many doctors were either unable to recognize the problem or were unwilling to take it seriously.

Some of the blame can be attributed to the computer keyboard itself. The "QWERTY" keyboard layout common to most computers today was the result of mechanical limitations in the design of the typewriter, but it forces the fingers to move inefficiently.

Possibly the most significant claims for compensation have yet to come. In the newspaper industry, for instance, the largest reported incidence has been at the *Financial Times*, where 130 people reported symptoms of RSI in a management survey. Several journalists have been on paid sick leave for more than 18 months—the management says there are nine, the NUJ says there are 20.

Marcus Bezzi is an Australian lawyer specializing in RSI claims at the law firm Stephens Innocent. Mr Bezzi has seen 50 potential plaintiffs this year alone. His firm is acting on behalf of several journalists with NUJ support, and is preparing to issue writs for RSI compensation against several newspapers and a news agency.

Whatever the cause of RSI, the cost of adequate health and safety provision must be built into future computer investment decisions. If the recent trends, both in and out of the courts, continue, the cost of technology may have to be counted, not only in software and hardware, but in compensation too.

SCIENCE REPORT

Grape proves a fruitful step

In computer science there is a tendency to think that bigger problems demand bigger and more expensive computers for their solution. But in today's issue of *Nature* (vol.345, pp. 33-35), Toshikazu Ebisuzaki and colleagues from the University of Tokyo describe a purpose-built computer, called the Grape, that can perform a particularly vexing task as quickly as the world's largest machines but at a fraction of the cost.

At the heart of the group's work lies a perpetual dilemma for computer engineers: the trade-off between versatility and speed. In other words, is it better to build a computer that can do many things well, or one that excels at a single task? Most modern "super-computers", such as the Cray XMP/1, take the first option, and with good reason: they can be used to solve all manner of different problems. But the Grape reveals the advantages of the latter strategy. It can perform the task for which it was designed as quickly as a Cray but for a ten-thousandth of the cost.

Building a machine with only one string to its bow is justified if the problem it solves is particularly tricky. The Grape's specialty is the gravitational N-body problem, which is a particular concern of astrophysicists. It crops up, for example, in studies of the way that galaxies evolve in time. By setting up computer models of galaxies, researchers hope to gain some insight into this evolution.

Some galaxies, for instance, are thought to have been formed by the collision of smaller ones, and by simulating such a col-

lision on the computer, one can discover whether the end result looks anything similar to the objects actually seen through telescopes. But each of the millions of stars in a galaxy exerts a gravitational force on all the others, so calculating the gravitational forces which act on each star places tremendous demands on computers.

On the whole such simulations can be performed using only a few thousand stars per galaxy. Given that our own relatively ordinary galaxy contains about 100,000 million stars, these computer models are not realistic. But the Grape can cope with large numbers of stars because of its ability to perform many calculations in a single step, rather than doing them one at a time.

This is made possible by the way that the circuits are wired, so that several streams of information flow simultaneously down an electronic "pipeline".

(Grape is short for GRAvity Pipe). This is a hardware rather than a software solution: doing the same thing on a regular computer would be impossible without rewiring. There are several other areas of research in which the N-body problem is important. Simulating a lot of stars is not very different from simulating, for instance, a group of atoms moving about in a liquid.

The group points out that their Grape, although purpose-built, can be fairly versatile if joined together in bunches or connected with other machines. In view of which one might be forgiven for describing their approach as fruitful.

Philip Ball

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A life beyond the ice age

MEASURES are under way to protect a species of tree which endured the ice age 10,000 years ago, only to be threatened by 20th century exploitation of the environment. The species is a survivor which challenges the accepted view that, at the height of the ice age, the arboreal population of Britain was destroyed.

The contradiction to established ideas comes from a new method of biochemical analysis, pioneered by scientists at the Northern Research Station of the Forestry Commission, near Edinburgh.

They have employed the method to unravel the most intimate genealogy of the Scots pine, with some startling results. The Scots pine, along with the yew and the common juniper, form Britain's only native conifers.

The originally extensive cover of the Scots pine has been drastically reduced by

The Scots pine challenges the view that Britain's trees were totally destroyed

various forms of exploitation of land for agriculture and development and by neglect through preference for imported species in commercial forestry.

There are only 40 or so remnants in Scotland, with others planted elsewhere. Yet Ian Forrest, one of the commission's biochemists, sees Scotland's native pine woods as "perhaps the most characteristic and ecologically important type of semi-natural vegetation still in existence in the country".

Measures to protect and restore the remnants have followed a reawakening interest on the part of foresters, conservationists and landowners in preserving these special tree communities. To

avoid further mixing of separate gene pools, and to highlight those woodlands which may contain trees of especially interesting, unusual or useful genetic make-up, the scientists devised a scheme that is analogous to the DNA-fingerprinting technique used in forensic science.

Comparison of the external features of the trees was inadequate. The scientists have been able to compare, instead, the composition of a family of biochemicals found in the resin of trees known as terpenes.

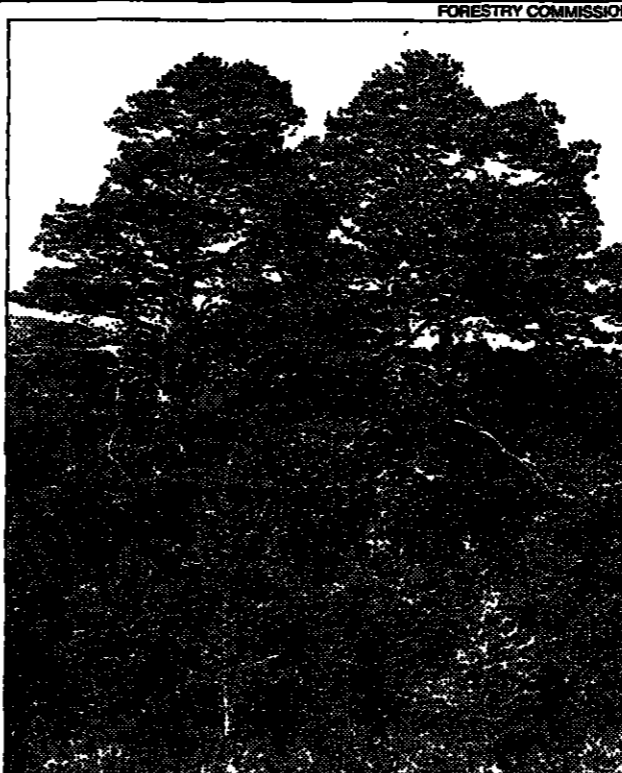
In an outline of the method in *Forest Life*, the commission's occasional publication of advances in forestry, Mr Forrest explained how the trees could be classified into

two distinct races of Scots pine with different histories.

The terpene analysis provided a scheme of dividing Scotland into seven broad regions, according to the type of pine that was the indigenous member. The woodlands group of five regions showed subtle distinctions while sharing overall characteristics, suggesting they originated from Continental sources after the last glacial period.

"Fingerprinting" in the other two regions, one in the north-west and one in the south-west of Scotland, revealed such marked differences that they have been dubbed the "special western group" which may have originated from "refugia" that somehow survived glaciation, later to recolonize the restricted area where they are now found.

Pearce Wright



A survivor: the Scots pine lived through the ice age

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Heart patient hope in drug find

Thomson Prentice on a new therapy which promises safer heart surgery and relief for troubled blood banks

In an operating theatre in a London hospital a few days ago, a middle-aged woman underwent a complex heart operation which should have required transfusions of 10 or more pints of blood.

In fact, she needed only one, due to a remarkable new form of therapy which holds the promise of improved safety for many thousands of patients like her, and which could help reduce the chronic shortages in many of the world's blood banks.

Ken Taylor, of Hammersmith Hospital, in west London, who performed the heart valve replacement operation, will attend an international conference of heart surgeons on Saturday to deliver the results of more than 600 such operations using aprotinin, a drug that is helping make transfusions redundant.

Two years ago, Professor Taylor, the British Heart Foundation's professor of cardiac surgery at Hammersmith, and David Royston, a consultant anaesthetist now at Harefield Hospital, Middlesex, discovered, by chance, the astonishing ability of the drug to prevent excessive post-operative bleeding by high-risk heart patients.

Aprotinin had been used routinely for at least 30 years to treat acute inflammation of the pancreas. Professor Taylor and Dr Royston were trying to find whether it could also reduce lung inflammation in patients who were on a heart-lung bypass machine during cardiac operations.

"We suddenly realized that the patients coming off the machine towards the end of the operation did not bleed as much as might have been expected," Dr Royston says. "We did not understand why, until we found it was only true of patients who had been given aprotinin."

After a coronary bypass, particularly if it is a repeat operation, patients can lose six or more pints of blood. But aprotinin has meant that transfusions are now seldom necessary in such cases.

Clinical trials of the drug in Britain, West Germany and the Netherlands show that less than a



Matter of heart: Professor Ken Taylor will deliver his findings on aprotinin, based on more than 600 operations, to an international conference

quarter of patients have needed to be given blood, and in much smaller quantities than those undergoing the same operations without aprotinin.

The results showed no significant side-effects and have been so impressive that the drug is now used in about 65 per cent of all open-heart surgery in West Germany.

American surgeons are testing it in similar operations, while in Britain its use has been extended on a trial basis to a small number of heart transplants, and to cardiac surgery at the Hospital for Sick Children, in Great Ormond Street, London.

Professor Taylor will present the latest evidence during the American Association for Thoracic Surgery conference, which begins in Toronto on Sunday. He will show delegates a film of two identical bypass operations he carried out

recently at Hammersmith Hospital. One patient, who was not given aprotinin, lost almost three times as much blood as another who was given it, and needed two pints of blood after an operation which, due to bleeding problems, took 28 minutes longer. The patient given aprotinin needed no transfusion.

"Our experience in Britain and from other European hospitals confirms quite clearly the efficacy of the drug," Professor Taylor says. "It allows the majority of these high-risk patients to undertake surgery without even a single unit of transfused blood."

"I have no doubt that it has meant survival, and a good surgical result, for some patients who might not otherwise have survived the operation."

Impressive though the results have been, there is a big gap in the aprotinin story: nobody, including

Professor Taylor and Dr Royston, can explain exactly how it works.

They believe that when a patient's blood passes through a heart-lung machine during cardiac surgery, changes occur in the blood platelets which impair natural clotting processes and thus make excessive bleeding more likely. Aprotinin, which is infused into the patient throughout the operation, is supplied simultaneously to the machine, and appears to protect the platelets.

"It's still a bit of a mystery," Professor Taylor says. "A lot of research is going into understanding the precise mechanism of action. But we feel we know enough to be sure that we are not taking a leap into the dark."

The Department of Health has not licensed the drug for general use in cardiac surgery, and until it has weighed up all the evidence,

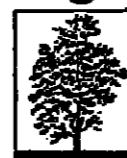
aprotinin is available only on a restricted, "named-patient" basis. The same is true in the United States, where the Food and Drug Administration is also studying the results of clinical trials.

However, it seems likely that, sooner rather than later, the drug will be much more widely used. If so, Professor Taylor acknowledges, it could play an important role in reducing the need for transfusions in other types of surgery, and thereby further help preserve precious stocks of donor blood.

"These are particularly difficult days for the transfusion services because demand constantly exceeds supply. In addition there is the need for rigorous screening of blood donations against the viruses which cause Aids and hepatitis," he says.

"The use of aprotinin in cardiac operations does offer a major contribution to blood conservation."

Tree study urges plan



While the destruction of tropical rainforests is causing anxiety, a new study concludes that

drastic changes are also needed in forestry practice in Europe to protect the climate. An investigation by the 16-nation International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, based in Vienna, recommends a major overhaul in silviculture for economic as well as ecological reasons. Professor Sten Nilsson, principal investigator of the institute's forest study, says that the level of destruction shows that more controls are needed over the emission of pollutants which are killing trees across Europe. Recommendations from the investigation, to be published soon in a three-volume set, include conversion of agricultural land and pasture to silviculture and rehabilitation of damaged forests. If implemented, land area devoted to forests would increase by 5 per cent over the next 30 years.

Fusion power

A small scale "cold fusion" power plant could be built at the University of Utah by the end of the year, according to James Brophy, the vice president of the research institute which was formed at the university to study the process. About a year ago, chemists Stanley Pons and Martin Fleischmann claimed to have achieved nuclear fusion at room temperature. There have since been dozens of attempts to reproduce the experiment, without success. "Pons and Fleischmann have hopes of building a 100-watt power plant by the end of the year that they can turn on and off at will," Mr Brophy said. "I think they might be a little premature [regarding the timing], but I'm not going to criticize them."

Aids agent

Scientists have discovered a new agent with potent medicinal properties which, in laboratory experiments, stops the proliferation of the Aids virus in heavily infected cell cultures. The agent's mechanism differs from the available treatments to halt the spread of the human immuno-

BRIEFING

deficiency virus (HIV) and also avoids their side-effects, according to the report in the latest issue of *Science*. The compound is based on an enzyme called protease which is essential for the formation of the virus from simple molecules produced by the infected cell. The advance involves a university and industry collaboration between the British research laboratories of the Roche drug firm, St Mary's Hospital Medical School, in London, University of Wales College, in Cardiff, and the Medical Research Council Collaborative Centre, in London.

Home work?

IBM is preparing a home computer for launch this summer according to the American magazine, *PC Week*. The company first tried to sell such a machine in 1984 with little success and since then has concentrated exclusively on its business customers. The company refused to comment on the magazine report which predicted the launch of an £800 machine with hard disc, modem and software. Both the price and software mentioned indicate the computer would be aimed more at the those requiring a "home" computer for work rather than the new breed of entertainment machines reviving the computer games market.

Turtle link clue

A study of human-sized turtles suggests that dinosaurs were able to regulate their body temperatures in warm and cool climates in much the same way as large mammals. Two researchers from Drexel University in Philadelphia reported in the journal *Nature* that the physiology of the reptilian leatherback turtles may explain how dinosaurs were able to survive in warm and icy conditions more than 65 million years ago. Reptilian leatherbacks are able to withstand freezing water because of their sheer size and by regulating their blood flow to conserve energy, the scientists said. "Because of their large body size, dinosaurs were able to use their bulk as insulation and as a counter-current heat exchanger," James Spotila, a physiologist, claimed.

Matthew May

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Continued on next page

Director



The British Industrial Biological Research Association is seeking a suitable candidate for appointment as Director and Chief Executive upon the retirement of Dr S. D. Gangoli early in 1991.

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Direct action is the best avenue

THE 1954 World Cup finals were packed with 140 goals. In the 1986 finals, although the total of matches had doubled, the total of goals was more than halved. The natural conclusion might be that modern defences are more sophisticated and more difficult to penetrate.

Charles Hughes, the national director of coaching of the Football Association, disagrees. He concedes that defences, and particularly goalkeepers, have indeed improved but describes those factors as "peripheral".

In his opinion, the increasing inefficiency of attacks is the principal reason behind football becoming comparatively less negative and unproductive.

For three years, he analysed films of the World Cup, covering the finals between 1966 and 1986, and found that the evidence substantiated his belief.

The possession game — defined as moves of six or more passes — is overwhelmingly less successful as a strategy than direct play — moves of fewer than six.

He uses statistics, gathered from the World Cup and from a random selection of Liverpool's fixtures from 1984 to 1988, to prove his point.

In the 109 matches included in the comprehensive survey, the world's most effective teams scored 202 goals. Only 26 were claimed through the possession game. Seven out of eight goals, in other words, were a product of direct play.

The figure is even more convincing in the most important match of all, the World Cup final itself. Including England's triumph at Wembley in 1966, only two of the 27 goals have been preceded by elongated moves.

Whether they were consciously aware of it or not, the likes of Argentina, Brazil, Italy and West Germany have been seven times more likely to score through direct play than through the possession game.

The speed with which an attack has been launched has been proved to be critical.

Indeed, the most trusted method of unbinding the opposition is to eliminate passes altogether. A quarter of all goals are scored through instant strikes, such as a direct free kick, an interception or a free header.

By contrast, a move of more than five passes leads to a side into "the area of diminishing returns".

The success of an attack is more likely to be achieved through speed rather than lengthy possession of the ball, according to Charles Hughes, the Football Association's national director of coaching and education. In the second of three articles, Stuart Jones, Football Correspondent, looks at how Hughes employs a statistical approach to find *'The Winning Formula'* in football

Lineker, the swiftest member of the England front line, is therefore an ideal weapon. He can be released with one precise through ball, as he was regularly during the last World Cup in Mexico, where he finished as the leading scorer. He promises to reach the same position in the first division this season.

The ball need not be propelled over a huge distance. For example, remember Gascoigne's exquisitely executed lob into the path of Bull for England's first goal against Czechoslovakia last week?

Nor is Hughes insisting that, once five passes have been exchanged, an attack has necessarily become invalid. "If the opposition's defence is so good that you can't make any headway, you don't just concede possession," he said.

The statement was significant. Before this week's seminar, it was generally thought that the national director of coaching was preaching a different gospel; that he was advocating the long-ball game.

That detestable version of football is based on the simplest premise. Thump the ball as high and as far as possible towards the opponent's goal and light for it — in some cases, literally — where when it lands. The system caters for players who are fundamentally deficient in ideas and skill.

Mercifully, Hughes rejects the principle, and he illustrated the differences between his own philosophy and that of Charles Reep, the renowned proponent of the long-ball game.

"He says that you are wasting your time if a move is more than three passes, and he hasn't developed the technicalities to go with his theory," Hughes said.

Although Hughes has had the benefit of extensive inter-

national experience — he has taken charge of the England amateur, Olympic and under-16 teams in 85 fixtures — Reep has been attached to only domestic clubs.

One of them was Watford when the manager was Graham Taylor, who is being considered as Bobby Robson's likely successor. Reep, surprisingly, Taylor has turned to more sophisticated methods, as has been evident at Aston Villa this season.

Hughes admits that he has also modified his approach but he is adamant that he has always believed in "getting the ball forward" in a purposeful rather than indiscriminate fashion.

He cites the example of Liverpool, who most closely embody his philosophy. "They play far more long forward balls than any other team in the country," he said. "In percentage terms, they would be as much as 30 points above anyone else." Yet they complement their attacking play with the defensive strategy followed by Hughes.

"It is another popular misconception that retreat is the best form of defence," he said. "The statistics show that it is more advantageous to push up and close down the space." In his survey, he pinpointed the areas where defence was turned into the 202 successful attacks.

On more than half the occasions, possession was regained in the opposition's third of the pitch. He found that sides are four times more likely to score if they win the ball back there rather than in the midfield, and seven times more likely than in their own third. "I'm not saying that you never retreat but, if you can push up, do so."

The two basic lessons are being taught to England's most talented youths, and



Swift and sure: Lineker, of Tottenham Hotspur, is the "ideal weapon" for England

Hughes expects more than a few graduates of the FA's School of Excellence to put the theory into practice during the 1994 World Cup. In particular, they will be advised to keep the possession game out of their repertoire.

He remembers the goal scored by Netherlands in the

2-2 draw at Wembley two years ago. "There were 22 passes in that move but it was a friendly match. It was their party piece."

"We looked at seven of their World Cup ties to see if they repeated the pattern in a competitive fixture. They did so not once."

'The Winning Formula', by Charles Hughes (Collins, £9.95).

TOMORROW

Tactics: why Hughes thinks that 10 shots on target should guarantee World Cup victory

England men have to revive for tests

By David Hands, Rugby Correspondent

The weary England players returned from Italy yesterday, content that they had completed international commitments both with victory and no injuries of consequence. For most of them it is now the order of the day — until they are required, on June 23 and 24, for fitness testing, prior to the departure of the Argentinian tour party.

Despite the jaded nature of the 33-15 win on Tuesday over an Italian XV in Rovigo, however, there were some worthy displays — Nigel Heslop, the Orrell wing, made an excellent impression, concentrating well and invariably making ground with the ball, even though he was not among the try-scorers. John Buckton, the new captain of Saracens, reminded observers of the subtle skills he brings to centre play, while the scrum-half which has attended Rob Andrew's season throughout was sustained to the end.

Chris Oti, too, was much encouraged: was a bit apprehensive beforehand about how my knee would stand up to the match, but there was no pain and no reaction, no swelling," he said. The Wasps wing, whose previous senior game was for the Lions in Australia, was before a damaged cartilage cut short his tour, now hopes to build on the Rovigo match by playing some sevens and training regularly before leaving for Argentina.

Of the forwards, Neil Back continues to shine. The Nottingham flanker adjusted swiftly to the pace of the game against an Italian side, two-thirds of whom are regulars in their national XV — as against an England XV containing six of their five nations' players. Back played in more than half his club's games

this season and has one further international commitment to go — for the Under-21 XV which plays against the French Armed Services Under-21s at Melun on May 12.

The selectors for that game have deliberately introduced those members of the squad who did not play in the 24-3 victory over Netherlands on Sunday, so there are six changes and a further positional switch which takes Alex Milward (Rosslyn Park) from No. 8 to centre, and Philip de Glanville (Durham University) nor Adebayo Adebayo (Bath) is available because of examinations.

Rugby Football Union officials who accompanied the players to Rovigo had their attention drawn to some interesting reports published in relation to Italy's preparations for the 1991 World Cup. The reports claimed that Italian players will receive monthly "assistance" amounting to £2 million (€600) a month for the duration of the tournament — assuming they qualify for the finals.

It was also hinted that more than a dozen Argentinians, some of whom have been capped by their country only to be sent to Italy for playing without permission, might become Italian passport holders over the next year and would thus qualify for selection.

ENGLAND UNDER-21 (v French Armed Services) at Melun (Photograph: L. McKenzie (Cover), G. Thompson (Harrogate), captain, L. Boyle (Mossley), N. Thompson (Gloucester), A. Line (Saracens), N. Summers (Reading), A. Widdie (Gloucester), J. Locke (Cardiff University), G. Baldwin (Loughborough University), N. Ashurst (Oxford), M. Poole (Leicester), A. Milward (Durham), N. Back (Nottingham), E. Peters (Loughborough University), Reginald (Gloucester), D. Bower (Gloucester), W. Watson, J. Davis (Bristol), N. Lyman (Gloucester), S. Davies (Rosslyn Park), D. Sims (Gloucester).

The midfield magician still perfecting his art

By Peter Bills

JEREMY GUSCOTT has a unique memory of striding on to Twickenham's cavernous stage before a capacity crowd. He remembers how his mother and father told him as a child to put your ear to the shell and listen to the sea?

"For me, running out at Twickenham is that noise created. Everything goes through your mind all at once; everything starts rushing around. You cannot focus your mind on anything, for a moment."

England's most exciting, charismatic player returns to headquarter on Saturday with Bath, as they seek to retain the Pilkington Cup. With the West Country's other formidable gladiators, Gloucester, also there, Jerry Guscott is guaranteed a roar akin to waves crashing upon rocks on the shoreline.

Guscott returns with a radically different profile to the young man who, a year ago, stepped, a shade tentatively, on to the field at Twickenham last May, when Bath met Leicester in the final. Potential has been gloriously proven in the interim, a shade more, he is now probably the most thrilling back in Europe, the Denis Chavet of the English game.

But the growing adulation is handled with a suave, elusive, almost unerring grace. On the field, "I try to be as normal as you can be. After all, I am still learning about the game. Saturday will be tough because Gloucester will want to see if they can deliver when it comes to the crunch games. You had to feel sorry for them losing the title at Nottingham. But now they have got to pick themselves up. They won't be easy to beat."

Guscott has recently been

concerned by certain personal performances for his club which have dipped below the level he considers to be acceptable. He can be a stern critic of his own game.

"It has been a very strange season because I have been away from the club so much. And I have found it difficult to switch back to club rugby. I have not peppered myself enough; I have not been able to get enough personal drive to want to do well. I have come back from such a high and something has been missing."

Such an admission disappoints him deeply. He looks at others, like Richard Hill, who have returned to club football and settled easily into the mould.

Perhaps his move to outside centre for Bath, suggested by Simon Halliday, has been a factor. The ball does take longer to reach him now than when the pair played left and right.

Of one thing, this greatly talented player is certain. The more anyone thinks about trying to act the star performer, the more it will backfire. So he will not utter a murmur of

disapproval if Bath grind out a cup win on Saturday which largely excludes the pacemen behind the scrum. By such a confession, he demonstrates conclusively that he is a realist, even if it is more likely that Bath will attempt an expansive game.

"I want Bath to win; it is such a special day for you get the same buzz as at an international. But winning makes it truly special. Defeat is not something we would contemplate."

Saturday sees Halliday's swan-song, suddenly, Guscott, the sorcerer's apprentice, is the main man. Two or three others may be nearing the end of five careers, therefore Bath may want to model their new team of the future on Guscott. But with his talent valued so highly in professional rugby, could they rely on him to stay?

"I would like to think I will be with Bath in five years time. Of course, as a player, it is hard to see that far ahead. But Bath means a great deal to me. I will not give up all this lightly."

Guscott is like the bottle of fine wine which needs a good cellar man to realize all its undoubted potential. Or, in this instance, an understanding coach. Jack Rowell has been a sage counsellor to the young player, someone able to offer creditable thoughts in a manner a young man would accept.

Guscott has solicited advice from his mentor and speaks highly of the man who has done so much to make Bath the club they are.

"I have had a long run and enjoyed it," Rainey said. "Not winning a cap at the World Cup was hard to take but playing against the All Blacks at Lansdowne Road more than made up for that."

What Humphreys called for yesterday was for a massive overhaul of the IOR that would encourage the development of lighter, much faster designs while retaining the proven measuring techniques and rule management that have developed over the past 20 years.

Irish plans for joint enterprise

By Peter Bills

IRELAND'S rugby and football authorities are discussing the development of an all-seat stadium with floodlighting at Lansdowne Road, Dublin.

The Football Association of Ireland (FAI) has already committed itself to the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU) to play its international games at rugby union's Irish headquarters for the foreseeable future. But to comply with the regulations of UEFA, the European football union, and FIFA, the game's governing body, standing spectators will not be allowed. Tony O'Neill, the general secretary of the FAI, said: "With the new regulations coming into force in 1992-1994, the FAI must now start building to that future."

"However, as our discussions with the rugby authorities are highly confidential, the only comment I can make at this stage is to confirm that negotiations have already taken place on the matter and are continuing."

The stadium has a capacity of 48,000, but this would have to be reduced in an all-seat venue. Ireland's rugby union team has lost the services of Philip Rainey, who has retired from representative matches. Ulster's first-choice full back for several years, Rainey will captain Ballymena next season in division one of the All Ireland League.

When he stepped on, against New Zealand in November last year, Rainey was in the Ireland World Cup squad in Australia four years ago and was a long-term understudy to Hugo MacNeill.

"I have had a long run and enjoyed it," Rainey said. "Not winning a cap at the World Cup was hard to take but playing against the All Blacks at Lansdowne Road more than made up for that."

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CRICKET

Universities profit as Test players line up for visitors

By Marcus Williams

VISITS by county sides to Oxford and Cambridge have for long been used as opportunities to rest experienced Test players and introduce promising youngsters. It will, therefore, come as a pleasant surprise to spectators, if not bowlers, in the university cities that in the matches starting today, David Gower and Robin Smith will be in the Hampshire side to face Oxford and Mike Gatting will be playing for Middlesex against Cambridge.

Hampshire will also welcome back their captain, Mark Nicholas, who has not yet played this season because of malaria contracted during the winter tour. Gower was further distressed on Tuesday by his side's inept cricket — Smith excepted — in an 87-run defeat at the Oval.

Gower has played in only four matches since last season and missed the start of the season because of a high strain picked up in Barbados on Hampshire's pre-season tour, where he had one innings for the county and one for England against Barbados. He has played in one Refuge Assurance League match, scoring 32, and six against Surrey.

The Oxford batsmen will be spared the attentions of Marshall, although his understudy, Joseph, from Guyana, should keep them on their toes.

Gatting, meanwhile, has recovered from a strained ankle and will lead Middlesex against Fenner's. He was initially expected to be out of action for a week after failing to resume his innings against Essex on Monday. Three other Test players will be rested — Haynes, Dowton and Cowans — so Farbrace, the former Kent wicketkeeper, makes his first appearance for Middlesex, and Pooley, a left-handed batsman, is included.

In the second series of four-day Britannic Assurance championship matches, Viv Richards will be out to prove a point, when he plays for Glamorgan, against his former county, Somerset, who dispensed with his services in 1986. Somerset hope to have back their opening bowler, Jones. The county champions, Worcestershire, will discover this morning whether Rhodes is able to keep wicket against Nottinghamshire after fracturing his right thumb on Tuesday. Bevins will deputize if he is unfit. Nottinghamshire's captain, Robinson, has a back injury, so Somerset's Lewis has been called in as cover.

The Yorkshire captain, Moxon, returns against Warwickshire at Edgbaston, although he has not fully recovered from a broken big toe. Byers, the wicketkeeper, has recovered from a migraine attack and is expected to play. Booth, the former Yorkshire left-arm spinner, is in line to play against his old county in a side to which Donald and Moles are recalled. Paul Smith is ruled out by a knee injury.

Derbyshire will reshuffle their attack for the visit to Northampton, though the final permutation has yet to be decided. Base, an England hopeful, is omitted after disappointing early-season form. Cornwall's Warner and Miller are all injured, together with the batsman, Morris. Bishop, the West Indian, may join Malcolm to form a formidable new-ball partnership.

Northamptonshire will choose between Ambrose and David, in the fast bowling department and, depending on the state of the pitch, Govan, the Scottish off spinner, may join Cook in the spin section.

Among the five wickets he took in Oxford's first innings in 1986, that of the great Martin Donnelly, though not before he had made 142.

Before becoming immersed in the law, Lord Griffiths played a number of games for Glamorgan under the managerial command of Viv Richards. He describes him as having been "genuinely fast and potentially very good."

Lord Griffiths served with the Welsh Guards in the Second World War and was an MCC member. He was a first-class cricketer, and played for Glamorgan in the last two of those years.

As W. H. (Hugh) Griffiths, the president designate played for Charterhouse in 1940 and, sporting a shock of fair hair, opened the bowling for Cambridge at Lord's in 1946, 1947 and 1948, with Trevor Bailey in the last two of those years.

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